

A HELP to  
**PRAYER:**  
O R,

A Serious and an Impartial Discourse of Right Prayer, in the several Questions following.

- I. Who is that Man whom God will vouchsafes to hear in Prayer?
- II. What that Prayer is that God will accept as pleasing to him?
- III. Whether it be the Duty of an Unconverted Man to Pray to God, seeing all such a Man doth is Sin?
- IV. Whether it be the Duty of an Awakened Sinner to use a Set Form of Prayer?
- V. Whether the Gift of Prayer doth prove the Man in a Regenerate State?
- VI. What is that Spirit of Prayer which proves a Man to be Regenerate?
- VII. The Believer's Encouragement to the Duty of Prayer.
- VIII. Answers to the most Material Objections made by the Believer against himself.

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By Ja. Barry. *Rev.*

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T O T H E

Impartial and Unprejudiced

R E A D E R.

Courteous Reader,

**T**HOU art here presented,  
with a small Tract Stil'd, A  
serious Discourse upon Right  
Prayer. A Subject which many  
talk and dispute about, but few (yea,  
very few) of those Talkers and  
Disputers do savingly understand.  
To whom may (very aptly) be apply'd  
that of the Apostle Paul to Timothy,  
concerning those vain Talkers and  
Boasters of the Law, who were great-  
ly Ambitious to be Teachers of it,  
A 2                      albeit

## To the Reader.

albeit they neither understood what they said, or whereof they affirm'd, 1 Tim. 1. 7. Right Prayer (if I mistake not the sense of Holy Scriptures, and the Dictates of the Holy Ghost in my own Soul) it is a friendly speaking to God, (Petition-way) for such things, as are both lawful and needful in the name of Christ his Son, and that by the powerful assistance of the Holy Ghost. The several kinds of Prayer, as Publick and Private, Mental and Vocal, Solemn Set Prayer, (whether in the Closet, Family or Congregation) and Ejaculatory, I could not handle distinctly, because of the Brevity I intended, when first I resolv'd to appear in Print on this needful and useful Subject.

A Subject which I believe all truly wise and sensible Persons, who take notice of the Out-goings of God (in the way of his Providence) towards these Kingdoms, will be forced

## To the Reader.

ced to confess is of as great use to sinking England, &c. as ever it was.

And notwithstanding the great Necessity there is of this Generation's being acquainted with, and practically taken up and employ'd about Right Prayer, (the last Remedy which Souls in Distress usually betake themselves to for Help and Deliverance) yet such is the subtilty of the Devil, and the vanity of Mens deceived Hearts, that they will rather spend and waste away the precious Time, (which should be spent in Wrestling with an offended and a (seemingly) departing God) in frothy and vain Disputes about Prayer, than (Conscientiously) to fall on so needful and important a Duty.

If the saying of the Ancients be true, that *reces & Lachrimæ sunt Arma Ecclesiæ*, That Prayers and Tears are the Churches Weapons, I am very Confident, that when the

## To the Reader.

*approaching Storm which Threatens  
Ruin to (God-Provoking) England  
is at its Height, it will be (Experi-  
mentally) found that the Prayers  
and Tears of a Poor, Despised and  
Persecuted People in England, will  
be found to be the most formidable  
Weapons, which will Terrifie and  
Dis-spirit that Luciferian Monster of  
France, who pleaseth himself with  
the Self-flattering Hopes, (lodg'd in  
his graceless Breast) that as there  
is but one God, so he hopes and  
brags there shall be but one King on  
Earth, and but one Religion.*

*Now who he Intends shall be that  
one King, and which of all the abo-  
minable Religions, (now professed  
in the World) whether Popery, or  
Deism, Turcism, or professed Atheism,  
shall be the Religion he intends shall  
be (Universally) Established by his  
Dragooning Law, is left to thee to  
Judge and Determine.*

## To the Reader.

I dare engage for him he never designs that the Son of God shall be that One King, though he (and he alone, Excluding all others) will appear to be the Head and King of the People, whom the other designs shall be a Sacrifice to his Ambition and Dragooning Potency.

And as he is far from Designing, that the Son of God shall be that One King who shall Rule the World, which he hath already brought to his Foot in Imagination and Conceit only, so I do on the same Ground presume to Believe, he never designs that the Scriptural Religion, Established by the determined Council of Heaven, and made known in the Revealed Will of God, shall be the Religion he intends shall be Established.

We have many instances on Record (in God's Word) of the prevalency of Believers Prayers with God in the very instant of the Chur-

## To the Reader.

ches sinking Fears, when nothing but Death and Destruction lookt them in the Face, Dangers drew near, the very Jaws of Death were ready to close on them, they cry'd to God (by Right Prayer) in the name of Christ, and the Scale was (immediately) turn'd. God wrought their Deliverance and Escape, and in so doing he gave an everlasting Proof, that he is, what he hath stil'd himself in his Word, (viz.) A God hearing Prayer, Psa. 65. 2. And this is recorded in Scripture for the lasting Comfort and Encouragement of all true Believers, who only (excluding all others) are endued with the Spirit of Right Prayer.

In King Ahab's time, what a prevailer with God was Elijah for delivering Israel from the Judgments and Miseries their Sins deserved? Yea, so prevalent, that on that very account he was stil'd, the Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen there-



## To the Reader.

thereof, 2 Kings 2. 12. The meaning is, that Elijah wrought more for Israel's deliverance, by his powerful Prayers to God for them, than all their Men of Valour who fought in Chariots and on Horseback in Battel did.

And not only in the Case of Danger, which threatned the Israelites by War, was Elijah a Prevailer with God for them; but when God himself seem'd to Fight against them, by his shutting up the Sluces or Windows of Heaven, so as no Rain descended on the Earth for the Space of Three Years and an Half, and this at the earnest Prayer of Elijah; when nothing but Famine and Death lookt them in the Face, Elijah he Prays, and the Lord gave Rain, Ja. 5. 17, 18. 1 Kings 17. 1, 2. This, and the like Instances, are Recorded in Scripture, to inform God's Elect and Chosen People, that in all times of Danger, Prayers and Tears



## To the Reader.

are the surest and most proper Arms or Weapons for God's People to Fight the Powers of Darknes with. Not that I am pleading for the Doctrine of Nonresistance, as if Prayers and Tears were the only Arms or Weapons, which God's People ought to make use of for preventing the Ruin and Destruction design'd against them by the Enemies of God and his People. There are Times and Seasons which are proper for the Churches of God to fight with Prayers and Tears, (excluding all carnal Weapons :) And there are Times and Seasons wherein the People of God are to make use of the Temporal Sword, not excluding Prayers and Tears. The Holy Scriptures affords Instances of both these.

And the time is near (I verily Believe) when he who is skill'd and spirited, (as David was) to use both these sorts of Arms aright, will appear to be of greatest use and service to the Kingdom. The

## To the Reader.

*The Queen of Scotland, in the times of Darkness and Popery, breaking in upon that Kingdom, was heard to say, That she was more afraid of the Prayers of one John Knox, then she was of Ten Thousand armed Men.*

*Had the present Lewis Le Grand of France as much Sense or Conviction in his Natural Conscience as she had, he would Tremble and Quake to think of the Horrid and Desperate Attempts he designs to make upon these three Kingdoms, &c. where I hope he will find many Thousands of Precious Souls, who are Richly Blest with the Spirit of Prayer, as John Knox was.*

*These things I do but Glance at, to lay before every serious Reader an Occasion to bethink himself, that if ever England had an awakening call from Heaven to Pray and Cry mightily to God for England's Preservation from Ruin, it is now.*

*And*

## To the Reader.

*And to let him see how heartily desirous and willing God hath made me to be Instrumental in awakening every Reader to his Duty, and that by laying before him so material a Point, as to understand and know what kind of Prayer that is which will prove of Effectual avail to preserve the Kingdoms from the Ruin and Devastation which is design'd (by Men) against them.*

*If any Reader engage in a Quarrel against me, for the plainness and faithfulness used in this small Tract, time will prove him to be either an absolute stranger to the Spirit of Right Prayer, or else an avowed Friend and Well-wisher to the Interest of France and Rome, the Capital Enemies of Poor England, and the Protestant Religion.*

*Courteous Reader, The Lord be with thy Spirit to enlighten and teach thee from above, so as thou*  
*might-*

## To the Reader.

*mightest be able to say, (Experimentally) that what I have (as briefly and plainly as possibly I could) said on this subject of Right Prayer, is most certainly agreeable with the written Word of God. The which if God (by Reading the ensuing Treatise) Grant thee to understand and believe of a Truth: And if those who have the Spirit of Right Prayer, be also hereby Occasionally awakened and rous'd up, to wrestle (Jacob like) with God for England's Deliverance from that impending Ruin, which threatens the whole Protestant Interest all the World over, I have what I chiefly Aimed at. The Glory of which Service I heartily desire may be Ascrib'd and Given to God alone.*

Thine in the Lord,

*James Barry.*

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A  
DISCOURSE  
OF RIGHT  
PRAYER.

**T**HERE are two Things, which to know, are of highest Concernment to all who desire to be found Ranked among the true Worshippers of God.

*First,* To know the certain Character of the Person, whom God will vouchsafe to hear.

*Secondly,* To understand and know what kind of Prayer, that is, which God will accept as pleasing to him.

Both



Both these are Plainly (and Graphically) described, and set down by the Holy Ghost in *Isa. 5. 16. The effectual fervent Prayer of a Righteous Man availeth much.*

*Ques.* First, What is the distinguishing Character of the Man whom God will vouchsafe to hear?

*Ans.* The Person whom God will vouchsafe to hear in Prayer, he must be a Righteous Man. So saith the Spirit of Truth in the Scripture now Quoted. In this Term Righteous, which Characterizeth the Person whom God will hear, two Things are intended.

*First,* The state of the Man, Godward.

*Secondly,* His Walk and Conversation.

*First,* His State, (Godward) he must be a justified Person, one to whom the great God hath imputed



puted the Mediatorial, Spotless Righteousness of God-man for Justification, as truly as if that Righteousness (imputed) had been perform'd by the Sinner himself Personally.

He must be one to whom God hath fully and freely pardon'd all his Sins for Christ's sake, as truly, as if the Sinner had never been guilty of such Sins.

In these two Acts of God lyes (or consists) the true (and saving) Justification whereof the Gospel speaks. And this twofold Act of God is (every way) free, having no manner of dependance on any thing, like a previous Qualification in the Person of the Sinner justified; *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, Rom. 3.*

*34. But God who is Rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were*

*were dead in Sin, hath quickned us together with Christ: By Grace are ye saved, Ephes. 2. 4, 5.*

Here every saved Sinner may plainly see, that as the great God (who Acts all he doth in a way of absolute Sovereignty) did elect and chuse to himself, out of Lapsed *Adam's* Fallen and sinful Posterity, as many as he purposed to reconcile to himself by Jesus Christ his Son, not for any good which he foresaw would be in them, such as Faith, Repentance, or any Inclination (or previous Disposition) in themselves to answer God's Call, and to turn themselves in the work of saving Conversion, as Papists and Arminians hold and teach, were the Motives which mov'd the Almighty to fix his Decree of conditional and temporary Election; a Dream so altogether repugnant to the revealed Will of God, and contradictory to the  
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experience of every real Convert, that I am not afraid to affirm it to be a part of that Smoak which ascended out of the bottomless Pit, *Rev. 9. 2, 3.* and which the Jesuits (and their Followers) those infernal Locusts, are still endeavouring to Propagate everywhere, where the sound of the Gospel of God's Grace comes, that they may (by their Sophistical Distinctions in Divinity) darken and obscure the brightness of the Doctrine of Gospel Grace, and under a specious and plausible Pretence of opposing and running down Antinomianism, insensibly draw away the People from the ancient Gospel delivered by the Son of God, to imbibe those Poisonous Notions wherewith their pretended new Gospel Law is stuffed. As God (I say) did elect and chuse those whom he purposed to reconcile to himself by his  
Son

Son Jesus Christ, for no foreseen good in the Elect, so in the work of effectual Calling.

He is not mov'd to Call them, or to Justifie and Pardon them, for any thing like previous Qualifications inhering in themselves, or for any Performances acted (Personally) by them, in a way of Conditionality; but meerly and absolutely of his own Grace he calls and justifies those elect Sinners; who (in the very instant of God's calling and justifying them) were (in themselves as *Adam's* Children) Ungodly, Guilty, Miserable Sinners, as unable to contribute so much as a good Thought, or the least Inclination towards their own Recovery, as a Man naturally Dead and Rotten in the Grave, is to quicken and raise himself; dead and lost they were in *Adam* their natural and foederal Head in the Eye of God's Precognition (or  
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Foreknowledge) when he fixt his Decree (or Purpose) of saving them ; and dead and undone they are (in themselves) when his good Spirit comes to call them out of a Natural State, to a State of Favour and Friendship with God. And who can, who dares to deny what is now Asserted, but an ignorant Papist, who is judicially given up to the Power of Satanical Delusion, 2 *Thes.* 2. 11. Or a proud *Arminian*, who is not only a Stranger, but an Enemy to that Grace of God, which justifies and saves a Sinner, without the concurrence of the Sinner's own Personal Qualifications, as social Causes, with the Grace and Merit of Christ, in the work of Justification.

The Almighty was so far from foreseeing any good in the Elect, which could move or incline him to fix on (or chuse) them before others,

others, that he himself declares the Contrary, as is most plain and conspicuous to the Eye, *which is not smitten with judicial Blindness*, Esa. 48. 8. *Yea, thou heardest not, yea thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine Ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.* This agrees with Gen. 6. 5. *And God saw that the wickedness of Man was great on the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* If then this be the depraved State and Condition of all *Adam's* Children since the Fall and Apostacy of their natural and foederal Head, and that the Eye of God's foreknowledge Perfectly foresaw it would be so, whence can any Rational Being conceive a fallen Sinner should have any Qualifications which should move or invite  
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the Holy God to like or love such an one.

To say (and hold) that God bestows the Qualifications, which must render the Sinner capable of disposing and inclining himself to Conversion, and of doing such Duties as may give him a right to claim the Promise of Pardon and Salvation, he having perform'd the Condition on which Life and Salvation is held forth and offer'd in the Gospel, is (in Effect) to say and hold, that God hath bestowed his Son on Sinners, that he might be made a Curse, to Merit for them such Qualifications as may render them capable of performing those Conditions on which Life and Salvation is tendered in the Gospel. And who sees not, that by this Doctrine (or Principle) the Crown is taken from off the Head of God's free and sovereign Grace, and Christ  
his



his Son, and is put on the Head of a Poor, Blind and Proud Sinner, who by his best Qualifications (till he be in Christ by Regenerating Grace, and Christ in him by Faith) can, neither will, nor acquire any Qualifications, but what meetens and fits him for the vengeance of eternal and unquenchable Flames. Oh *England!* *England!* Miserable is thy present Case, seeing that the Wit and Learning of thy most Quaint and Topping Preachers, both Non-conformists and Conformists, is (by God's just Judgment, for their turning the back on the good old Doctrine and Discipline of Christ, chalkt out in the Gospel) become no better than Froth and Vanity, there being little else in the florid Sermons of such than Sound and Noise, painted and set off with the varnish of Humane Eloquence, which  
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the Spirit of God Stiles the enticing words of Man's Wisdom, 1 Cor. 2. 4. which God himself Cautions us to beware of, Colos. 2. 4, 8. It may be truly said of these kind of Noisie Preachers as of the Nightingal, *Vox & præterea nihil*, All Voice and nothing elie. The Nightingal hath neither Flesh, nor (yet) Feathers, which renders her Desirable and Profitable to the Sons of Men; she hath only a charming Voice, wherewith she tick'les the Ears of Mortals.

Oh! The vanity of those Nightingal-like Preachers, (here intended) how Pernicious and Destructive are they both to the Interest of Christ (in these Kingdoms) and to the Eternal Welfare of the Souls of the People, while by their Luxuriant Wit, and Jingling Parts, they undermine the Gospel of our Salvation, not  
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vouchsafing the Son of God so much Honour, as once to be Nam'd in many of their Sermons, unless he be brought in as an Abettor of the Doctrine of free Will, and general Redemption, those Pestiferous and Soul-Damning Delusions, of which the greater Number (by far) of professing Protestants, both Nonconformists and Conformists, are (of late Years) grown too too fond; an Argument that desolating Judgments are hastening on the Kingdoms. So much concerning the first Branch, discovering the State of the Man, whom God will vouchsafe to hear. He must be one who is reconciled to God, who is at Peace with Heaven, through the spotless Righteousness of Christ put on him, by God's own Act of free Justification, and his merciful Act of pardoning all his Transgressions. No-  
thing

thing short of these two Acts of God's passing on the Sinner, can bespeak him fit to stand before the (Incomprehensibly) Holy God, so as to find acceptance in his sight; can two walk together except they be agreed? *Amos* 3. 5. It is here, as with a Person who of a loyal and useful Subject, is become a notorious and trayterous Rebel. Neither the Loyalty and Service of the time Past, nor yet the personal Accomplishments whereby he is fitted for future Service, will be able to make way for him into the Royal Presence. Nothing can do this for a Traytor and Rebel, but the King's Free and Gracious Act of Indemnity. Until this be granted and past upon him (in a Legal way) the King can do no less (in Honour and Justice) than banish him his Court and Presence. Neither his past Service, nor yet his great Accom-

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plish-

plishment, (whether natural or acquir'd) will bespeak him pleasing and acceptab'e in the Eye of the offended Majesty.

As in a civil Respect, when we behold a comely proper Man, who for Beauty, Parts, and great Estate far out passes and excels other Men, riding backwards towards *Tyburn*, we shake the Head, crying out, Oh! What a pity is it that such a brave Man should be Hang'd?

So in like manner, when we consider a Man of incomparable Endowments, (both natural and acquired) which bespeaks the Man a Nonfuch in the Church, both for Learning, Parts, and seeming Zeal for God, we (commonly) cry out, Oh! What a pity is it that such an one should be damn'd at last?

But certain it is (and God will make Men know it sooner or later)

ter) that as without the King's Royal Pardon, the former will (notwithstanding all his outward excellencies) be hang'd; so without the work of Regeneration pass on the other (before Death) he will as certainly be (eternally) Damn'd, be his Gifts and personal Qualifications equal to those of the Angels. The Mouth of Christ (which never Spoke a Lie) Affirms it, Jo. 3. 3. *Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily I say unto thee, except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.*

Secondly, Besides God's twofold Act of imputing a spotless Righteousness, and freely pardoning a Man's Sins. The term Righteous in the Text, intends a Principle of Holiness wrought in the Soul (call'd inherent Righteousness, or a change of Nature) by which Principle the Justified, Par-



doned Sinner, is made to die to Sin, and to live unto God. The ground and foundation of both which Acts (in the renewed Soul) is the Virtue and Power of Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection, savingly apply'd by the Holy Ghost, in the work of effectual Calling. What things the Holy God hates, and forbids in the Moral Law, those the Heart and Soul of the justified and renewed Sinner hates and strives against all his Days. Those things which he positively Commands, the Heart is inwardly reconcil'd to them, approves of them as Just, and Good, and Holy, endeavouring (the utmost of his Power) to regulate all his Actions, by the unerring Rule of God's blessed word. *Psal.* 119. 9, 105. *Rom.* 7. 12. This is to have the Law of God written in the Heart, according to *Psal.* 37. 31. *The law of his God is in his heart,*



*heart, none of his steps shall slide.* Here is a plain Character of a good and righteous Man, one who is not Born so, but made so, by God's most gracious Acts passed on the Person of the Justified, Pardoned and Renewed<sup>d</sup>....., as already mentioned. And where God effects this great and wonderful Change in and upon a Poor, Dead, Guilty Sinner, there doth he fulfil and make good the free and absolute Promise of his gracious Covenant. Jer. 31. 33. *But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* Wherewith agrees that Promise in Ezek. 36. 26. *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of*

*your flesh, and I will give you an Heart of flesh. Ver. 27. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

Observe, Reader, how full of Emphasis the very words of God's Covenant are to discover and prove, that in the great work of begetting a Soul to Christ, (in the work of effectual calling) God whose work it is, (excluding all subordinate Agents, as to Efficiency) speaks and acts like an absolute Sovereign, whose will and word are no way capable of frustration (or being vacated) by the Power of Second Causes. I will give you a new Heart. I will put into you a new Spirit. I will write my Law in your inward Parts. I will pardon all your Iniquities. And I will be your God. And as touching the Sinners, to whom these Promises are made,  
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the performance of these Promises are not made to them, on any Condition whatsoever. As if ye will prepare and dispose yourselves to convert and return to God. If ye will humble yourselves by Fasting and Prayer. If ye will confess and bewail your manifold Rebellions, against the Majesty of Heaven. If ye will believe and repent; then all my Promises shall be made good to you. But as God saith (positively) I will do so, and so to and for you; so he as positively engages for the Sinner, that he shall be made willing to become the Lord's, and to do whatever the Lord requires as Duty and Service, in the way of grateful Acknowledgment, for what the Grace and irresistible Power of God hath wrought in, and done for him, a poor redeemed Captive.

The Methods therefore which too many Preachers take (in this

Day) in pressing Sinners to the works of Mortification and strict Living, as that which must entitle them to Christ and eternal Life, are Preposterous and Damning: And their persisting in thus doing, in such days of Gospel Light as *London* now enjoys, sufficiently marks them out for Sons of the Bondwoman, who Act all they do (in a way of Duty) from a Spirit and Principle altogether Mercenary and Legal.

These Preachers, and all who adhere to their Conditional Covenant of working for Life, may read their Names and Portions in *Gal. 14. 30.* Sons of the Bondwoman they are stiled by the Spirit of God. And the same Spirit which stiles them so, hath also pronounced their doom and sentence, which is to be excluded from all hopes of being saved; if the God whom they so ignorantly

ly

ly serve, leave them to this servile Mercenary Spirit When I say, that besides the imputed Righteousness of the Son of God, put on the Sinner in Justification, there is also communicated to him, and powerfully wrought in him, a Principle of inherent Righteousness, (or Gospel Holiness) whereby the justified and renewed Sinner is made to die unto Sin, and to live unto God; I do not mean that such a Sinner never more Acts Sin in Thought, Word, or Deed, from the instant of such a Change passed on him, to the end of Life; for to hold (or say) so, I should both contradict the Spirit of God (in the Scriptures) and offend against the Generation of God's Children, *Psal. 73. 15.* But my meaning is, that by that new Nature Communicated (in effectual Calling) such a wound is given to the Body of indwelling Sin,

Sin, as that the renewed Soul can never more like (or love) Sin, as before Conversion it did. And albeit the justified and renewed Soul be often foiled and wounded by repeated Backslidings from God, yet cannot that usurping Tyrant Sin ever get possession of the believer's Heart any more, so as to Rule and Reign there, as before effectual Conversion it did. *Rom. 6. 14. Gal. 5. 24. 1 Jo. 3. 9.* Though (through the violence of Temptation, and the remaining strength of indwelling Corruption) the believer may fall into actual Folly, to the grieving that Holy Spirit, whereby he is sealed to the day of Redemption, cloud his evidence for Heaven, lay a foundation for God's Chastisements on himself, &c.

Yet the Heart (within) remains (irreconcilably) out with Sin; neither can the believer (by any means



means) be wrought on, to a loving or liking it, either in Heart or Life. *He that is born of God doth not commit Sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot Sin, because he is born of God, 1 Jo. 3. 9.* ἀμαρτίαν ἔπιει, *Operam not dat iniquitati.* He makes not a trade of Sin, or he commits not Sin, with full purpose of will, and delight of Heart. Time was when he could, and did; the remembrance of which, sets him on renewed Acts of Repentance (and self-loathing) before God. But since the powerful work of Conversion hath past upon him, indwelling Sin hath lost (though not its defiling Power, yet) its condemning and reigning; strength is gone in the Soul, by which means the Believer hath forgotten his old Trade of committing Sin with greediness and delight. On this very account it is, that the Evangelical

gelical Dr. *Tho. Goodwin*, hath the saying, That when a true Believer doth (at any time) act Sin, he is (at best) but a bungler at sinning; he is (herein) like a Tradesman, who was once skilful and expert at his Trade, but through disuse (or discontinuing his Trade) he becomes a meer Bungler, such a Man can say (and that truly) I could shape and finish such a Garment, or such, or such a piece of Work, as well as any he whatever; but indeed I have forgot my Trade, and am now to seek.

And is any thing more sure, than that the Man who is savingly Regenerated, must and will confess (to his own grief and shame) time was when I could Curse, Swear, be Drunk, prophane the Name and Sabbaths of God, &c. as Eagerly, and with as great Delight, as any now in Hell; or as those poor befotted Debauchees,

who

who are now ripening themselves for Ruin, and not only so, but who are contending and striving which of them shall first arrive in Hell; but (to the praise of God) I am forced (now) to say (and that in Truth) I find such a change in my Nature, that (to gain the world) I cannot (now) do, as I was wont to do formerly; those Immoralities wherein I sometime pleased and delighted my very Heart, I now abhor and loath them; yea, I abominate and abhor my self to think of them. And the Acts of Religious Duties, which (before) I scorn'd and laugh'd at, now I prize and value, accounting them more desirable than my daily Bread. And from what Principle this (so great and wonderful Change) should spring except that Seed of God communicated in effectual Calling, cannot be devised. That  
Seed

Seed (call'd the New Creature, or the Divine Anointing ) pour'd forth (on the elect Soul) in Conversion, it is a living Spring flowing from Christ, ( that living Fountain of all Grace and Life ) into the Soul of the effectually Called Sinner. And like as in Nature, a right natural Spring will purge and purifie it self from whatever Dirt or Filth is cast or fallen into it, even so that living Spring of Grace (in the regenerate Soul) which took its first Rise (or Original from the inexhaustible fulness of Christ, ( its Fountain ) and which is (continually) fed, by the renewed supplies which flow from Christ into the believer's Soul, it will (it can) never be reconciled to any Sin, though never so pleasing to the unregenerate Part in the Believer ; but when the Believer is surprized by a Temptation to Act Folly, that living Spring

(of

(of Grace in the Soul) falls on purging out the Filth and Guilt, contracted by that Sin fallen into, and can never be quiet until the Believer (by renewed Acts of Faith on the Blood of Christ, and godly Sorrow and Repentance for such a Sin, recovers again the sense and perception of God's Favour; and not only so, but until the Believer feels (in himself) that by that very fall he hath got more strength against indwelling Sin than he had before; while by that Fall, his Hatred of, and Antipathy against all Sin, is increased and strengthened; this may be lookt on (by those whose Principles and Practices bespeaks them Children of the Bond-woman) to be Antinomian Doctrine: But whether they receive or reject it, sure I am, that the Word of God warrants the believing it for undoubted truth, and I doubt  
not

not but the Experience of the most judicious Christians will readily subscribe the same.

Neither do I mean, (in the second Place) that the (truly) regenerate Soul, doth (in his living to God) come up to that perfect Conformity to the Law of God, as is his Duty: But my meaning is, that the (really) converted Soul, doth as truly aim at, design, and endeavour to give and perform Sincere and Universal Obedience to the Law, as the old *Adam's* Nature, (in him) leads and stirs him up to violate, and transgress God's Holy Law, both Negatively and Positively.

And wherein he finds himself short of that Obedience, which God's most Holy and Righteous Law requires, he confesses and bewails (with shame and sorrow) his shortness in Duty, and by renewed Acts of Faith and Fervent Prayer,



Prayer, (to the Throne of Grace) he flies to the Perfection of Christ, his Sureties, Perfection, Obedience to the Moral Law, laying hold thereon, and by Faith appropriating and applying the same to himself as his own; and under that Shadow he finds himself safe and secure.

Having thus (as plainly and briefly as I could) describ'd the Person whom God will vouchsafe to hear in Prayer, I come (in the next Place) to discover what kind of Prayer that is which he accepts.

As the word δικαιοσ. Just, or Righteous, properly signifies a Person who is (by the Judge) declared (or pronounced) to be Just, (or Innocent) or to be absolved or acquitted in Judgment, and so marks out (by way of distinction) the Person whom God will hear, excluding all

all others whatsoever, be their Birth and Qualifications what they will, according to fleshly Generation.

So the words, *δ' ἐν οἷς ἐνεργουμένη*, *deesis Energoumene*, signifie and import an inwrought Prayer; or a Prayer wrought by the Holy Ghost, within the Soul of the Person so declared (or pronounced) Just and Innocent. And as the term Just, (or Righteous) distinguisheth between the Person whom God will hear, and the Person whom he abominates, so the terms inwrought Prayer, distinguisheth between that Prayer which pleaseth God, and the Prayer (or Prayers) which will stink in his Nostrils: how pleasing soever: Such Prayers seem to unjustified (and self pleasing) Zealots from the import and signification of the Word, (in the Original) I shall observe three things by way of Remark.

*First,*

*First*, That the inwrought Prayer mentioned in the Text, is the work of God's Spirit in the Soul, of a justified, pardoned Sinner in producing which the pardoned Sinner (himself) hath no hand, but is effected by the immediate Efficiency of the Holy Ghost, and is (therefore) a material Part of the new Creation, wrought in the elect Sinner in effectual Calling, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Ephes. 2. 10.

*Secondly*, That the inwrought Prayer in the Text, is the Gift of God, peculiar to the Elect, and to none else, and that in the Right of Election. God never sends forth the Spirit of his Son into the Heart of any Sinner, to enable the Sinner to call him, *Abba*, Father, but that Sinner whom the Father elected and chose to himself in Christ his Son, Gal. 4. 6.

*Thirdly*, That to mock and persecute those who have receiv'd this inwrought Prayer, (in their Souls)

Souls) it is the infallible Brand (or Character) of a Scoffing *Ishmaelite* who is a stranger to the Spirit and Grace of God's Covenant, *Gal. 4. 29. 2 Pet. 3. 3. Jude 18.*

*Fourthly*, That all Prayer (or Prayers) which is not inwrought in the Soul by the Holy Ghost, but is devised by humane Wit, and (by compulsion) impos'd on the Conscience, it stinks, and will be rejected of God, how plausible soever the Arguments for devising and imposing such Prayers be, *Esa. 29. 13.*

Having thus plainly discovered, that the Person whom God will vouchsafe to hear is (and must be) a justified (pardoned) Sinner, not one who is (yet) in a state of Enmity against (and Alienation from) God; and likewise that the Prayer which God will accept is the inwrought Prayer,

er, wrought (by the Holy Ghost) in the Soul of a justified (pardoned) Sinner ; not such Prayers as are composed by Man's Wit, and imposed (on the Conscience) by humane Authority.

I now proceed to speak to the several other Questions propounded to be resolved about Prayer.

And the third Question is, Whether it be Lawful for (or the Duty of) an unregenerate Man to Pray unto God, seeing that the best Actions of such a Man are an Abomination unto God ?

I answer in the Affirmative, that it is not only Lawful for, but the undoubted Duty of an unregenerate Man to Pray unto God. The Reasons (hereof) are as follow.

Reason (1.) *First*, Because Prayer (as it is a Part of natural Worship) is a Duty incumbent on all  
*Adam's*

*Adam's Children*: And albeit such is the depraved State and Condition of *Adam's Children*, that they cannot Pray without sinning in what they do; yet it still remains their Duty.

Reason (2.) *Secondly*, Because of two Evils, the less is (always) to be chosen.

It is a great Evil to offer that (as Sacrifice) to a Holy God, which is polluted with Sin, as all the Thoughts, Words and Actions of an unregenerate Man are: But it is a far greater Evil for a Sinner not to Pray at all.

The First, (*viz.*) to offer to God a Prayer, which abounds with Sin; argues a state of spiritual Impotency, from which the poor Captive Sinner can no way free himself.

But wholly to neglect (or slight) calling on God (in Prayer) it argues highest contempt against



against the Majesty of Heaven.

Reason 3. *Thirdly*, Because that out of the way of Duty, a Sinner is not to expect Help (or Relief) from God: Whatever the Almighty may do in a way of Sovereignty, in preventing the Destruction of his Creatures, yet Sinners have no ground (or warrant) to look, (or expect) that God should work for their Deliverance, while they (wilfully) neglect crying to, and calling on Him for Help and Relief.

Reason 4. Because God expects that the Talents of an unregenerate Man shall be improv'd; the natural Man (though a stranger to saving Grace) hath many good Gifts and Endowments from God, which are given to be employ'd for the Glory of God, and the Common Good, both of the Sinners, self, and others; and as

it is but rational that those Gifts should be improv'd to the utmost, in invoking the Name, and wrestling with the Majesty of Heaven for Help and Succour, in time of Need and Danger ; so it is most Just and Righteous with God, to turn the back on such who (thro' Sloth and Idleness) will rather lye down and Perish, than bestir themselves (in a way of Duty) to prevent their own and others Ruin. And albeit saving Grace be the absolute free Gift of God, and so out of the reach of an unregenerate Man's free Will, and the utmost Improvement he can (possibly) make of his Natural and Acquired Endowments, yet it is the undoubted Duty of the Sinner, to belabour himself, (to the utmost) according to the natural Ability he hath, to seek and beg from God the saving Grace he wants ; and if he Perish, he will find

find it greatly Advantageous to Perish in God's way; for to Perish in the way of Duty, will (undoubtedly) render the Torments of Hell more tolerable to him, than they will prove to the Presumptuous Despisers of God, who are grown so desperate in Sinning, as that they chuse rather to be Damn'd (Eternally) than once to Pray to the Almighty to deliver and save them.

Reason 5. Because the Poor Sinner knows not but that God may meet him in a way of sovereign Mercy, and saving Grace, when he sees the Poor Sinner just sinking under the Weight of his Sins, and Groaning and Sighing under the Sense and Feeling of his own Inability to help or save himself; when the Poor Sinner finds that he hath Run out the full length of the Chain of his own free Will and moral En-

deavours to save himself, and finds (in bitter Experience) that Salvation is (still) as far from him, as when he first set out in the way of working for Life, he is brought to that Extremity, as to Conclude and Cry out, I am past all Hopes of Recovery, by what Creatures can (Possibly) do; Lord! Help thou a Poor, Sinful and Helpless Creature, who have undone my Self, and wrought mine own Ruin: I find now (in woful Experience) that my Case and Condition is so (every way) Helpless and Desperate, that none in Earth or Heaven can (possibly) Heal or Cure me; but the rich, the free, and soveraign, undeserved Grace of thee, the everliving Soveraign of the World. If thou wilt, thou canst save me. If thou wilt not, my Ruin is of my self. I will (for ever) acquit and justify thee, from being any way

way the Cause of my Damnation.

I never Heard or Read, that ever God rejected any Poor Sinner, who came this length to meet God in the way of Duty.

But wo and alas ! The misery of this Age lies here, in that their cannot help themselves, is become a real will not. They neither will pray, nor strive (in the use of means) to prevent their own Ruin (what in them lyes); neither are they willing or desirous that God should save them in a way of free and absolute Grace.

Thousands upon Thousands, in City and Country, are so infected with the Pestiferous Contagion of free Will, and general Redemption, and the universal Grace which they Brag is offered and given to all Men, that they Act rather the Part of mad Men,

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than the part of Men designed for Life and Salvation, in that the free Will, and general Grace, (of which they so much Boast) are become as stupid and dead (as touching striving after God in the way of Duty) as Death it self.

All I shall (or need to) say of such Atheistical (besotted) Sinners, is, that if they have such a thing as free Will to Good, and a Power to forbear those abominable Sins which provoke God, and ripen themselves and the Nation for Ruin: If they have any part of that universal Grace, which (they Brag) is given to all Men; they are (of all Men) the most Wretched and Miserable: Because that among the many (Numberless) Millions in Hell, none will be found more Inexcuseable than they, in that they did not improve, but (with the Idle and Sloth-



Slothful Servant in the Parable) hid and bury'd their (so much boasted of) Talents of free Will, and universal Grace, *Mat. 25. 25. Mat. 12. 37.*

*Quest. 4.* Whether it be lawful for (or the Duty of) an awakened Sinner to take up with, and to make use of, stinted Forms of Prayer Composed by other Men, and by humane Authority Imposed on the Conscience?

To this Question I answer in the Negative, (*viz.*) That it is no way lawful for (or the Duty of) an awakened Soul to take up with, or to make use of stinted Forms of Prayer Composed by other Men, and Imposed (on the Conscience) by humane Authority.

The Reasons are plainly these which follow.

Reason 1. *First*, Because there is no need of such a Pra-

ctice; this will appear (convincingly true) if we (without Prejudice) consider but two Things.

*First*, The infallible certainty of such as are savingly Enlightened and Regenerated, having received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby they are enabled to cry, *Abba*, Father, and to Pray acceptably to God, *Rom. 8. 15, 26.*

Now for such Souls to take up with, and to make use of, stinted Forms of Prayer Composed by other Men, and Imposed by humane Authority, is not only needless, but very sinful. First, Needless, in that a living Spring (from the Fountain of living Waters) taking up its Lodging in the Soul of the regenerate Sinner, he is (thereby, and the Spirit from whom it came) enabled to Pray without any help from Creatures.

He who hath a running Stream within his own House, need not

be

be beholding to his Neighbours  
for Water, *Jo.* 4. 14. 1 *Jo.* 2.  
27.

As it is needless for the Believer, (who hath this living Spring of Grace in his Soul, and the Spirit of Grace too to inhabit in him) to be beholden to the Muddy Puddles of Mens composed Prayers; so it is very sinful, for the Believer to act so Injuriously against the Spirit, (whose Work and Office in the Soul it is to teach and enable the Soul to Pray aright) as to allow himself to Practise that which (experience Teaches) will prove no better than a quench Coal to the good Motions of the Spirit within the Soul; and also a keeping the Believer back from Waxing and Growing in the Grace and Spirit of Right Praying.

And as it is Sinful for a Believer to consent (or yeild) to such a Practice, so it is no less than spiritual Tyranny, and Religious Usurpation, for any (in pretence of Headship or Power over the Church) to impose (or force) their own composed (and stinted) Forms of Prayers, on the Consciences of those who (by Grace) are made Christ's free Men. It is neither likely, nor yet probable, that Christ should (by his Blood) purchase a Liberty for his Redeemed, to set them free from the sinking Yokes of Circumcision, and the Ceremonial Law, to the end the Sons of Men might exercise an Usurping (Lording) Authority over their Souls and Consciences, in imposing on them Tyrannical Yokes of their own Devising.

As for those unregenerate Sinners, who are (as yet) in a State  
of

of unregeneracy, it is no way conducing to their Conversion, to make use of such Forms of Prayer, whether out of Choice, or by Compulsion: For I shall die in the stedfast Perswasion, that that which is not an Ordinance of God, appointed for converting Soules to Christ, will ever awaken, convince or turn to Christ one Sinner. Sad Experience hath taught and convinced me, what a Hindrance the use of such Forms of Prayer hath been to keep me back from sound Conversion, in that all the effect such Forms of Prayer had on my Soul, was to Root me in a profound Security, and fixed Perswasion, that I was a true Son of the Church, and (Consequently) a real Convert: Whereas God and my Conscience knows, I was all those Years of my Zeal for those Forms of Prayer, as great a Stranger to  
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the new Birth as ever *Nicodemus* was: I neither laboured to stir up in my self (or to improve) those Gifts and Talents wherewith my Maker had endow'd me, whereby I might be brought to any sense of the State and Condition I was in before God, or be set forward towards saving Conversion; nor was I so much as put upon Suspecting or Questioning, whether I understood what true Praying (according to the Gospel) was; but taking it for granted, that because the Forms I used were sound and good, as touching the Matter; and because I was (more than Ordinarily) Earnest and Zealous in using them as my Prayers, I concluded that I was a Praying Soul, and (consequently) that I was a good Christian; whereas I was (afterwards) made to know, that until the Spirit of Adoption was given



given me, (in effectual Calling) I never did, nor could I, call God, *Abba*, Father, believingly and truly.

*Secondly*, If it be seriously (and without prejudice) Considered, that the Children of *Adam* (though unregenerate) are endued with natural Gifts and Parts, which God expects shall be improv'd in serving God, and the preparing for the coming of his Judgment, the Practise of using and resting satisfied with Forms of Prayer composed by other Men, takes the Sinner (clearly) off from a due Improvement of those Gifts and Talents wherewith God hath intrusted him, and renders him Obnoxious, and liable to the same Reprehension, and sad Sentence, which passed on the slothful Servant in *Mat. 25. 25.* who hid his Talent, and did not improve it.

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Had not such poor misguided Souls been wheedl'd into a self-pleasing Concept and Opinion, that that lazy and easie way of reading Book-Prayers, composed and made ready to their Hands, (or getting them by Rote) is a good (nay, the best and safest) way of Praying, for preventing their speaking either Blasphemy, or Nonsense in praying should they presume to Pray without a Form; they would (by a due and seasonable Improvement of their own Gifts and Talents) have prevented their being charg'd with Sloth and Unfaithfulness.

Another Reason of the Point is, because Reading or Repeating such composed Prayers, cannot (in truth and reality) be said or proved to be that Sinner's Prayer.

An industrious Improvement of the Gifts and Talents which God hath intrusted the Sinner with,

with, is that which God expects and looks for at his Hands, as a reasonable Service due to the Sinner's Creator; and for the Non-performance of which reasonable Service, the Lazy, Idle Formalist exposes himself to a liability to be turn'd out of House and Home, and to be lodg'd in utter Darkness, with the unprofitable Servant, *Mat. 25. 30.*

That such Reading or Repeating (by Rote) the Forms composed by another, is none of that Sinner's own Prayer, I shall make good, (against all gain-sayers) by induction of Particulars, which shall be propos'd by way of Comparison, for the great Satisfaction, and full Conviction, of every ingenious and unprejudiced Mind, which is desirous to see the Banner of God's Truth (in this Point) openly Display'd.

And

And, first, give me leave to Query, of the Patrons of such composed and imposed Forms of Prayer; suppose that the King's Speech, or the Bishop of *Canterbury's* Sermon (Preach't before the King) comes to fall into my (or some other Man's) Hand, this Speech (or Sermon) is Read with seeming great Affection and Zeal; it is well lik'd and approv'd of as a most excellent Speech or Sermon; doth my reading (or repeating by Heart) that Speech or Sermon, make it my Speech or Sermon? Is it not still the King's Speech, or the Bishop of *Canterbury's* Sermon? Let this comparison be weigh'd in the Ballance of a serious and an unprejudiced Consideration.

Again, I Query of the above-mentioned Patrons, of composed and stinted Forms of Prayers, whose (they think) those Verses were,

were, which were made in Favour and Commendation of *Cæsar*, and placed over the Pallace-Gate, wherein the Emperor was made equal to the Gods? Whether was *Virgil*, (who made and compos'd those Verses) or *Bathyllus*, (who vainly and foolishly Assum'd the same to himself) the true Author of them?

While *Virgil* conceal'd himself, *Bathyllus* run away with the Honour. But when *Virgil* comes in, with his --- *Hos Ego versiculos feci, tulit alter Honores*. I have made these Verses, another hath taken my Honour. *Bathyllus* sneaks away in Disgrace, and *Virgil* (the true Author of those Verses) was immediately advanced.

Let poor Prayerless Souls, who rest upon (and glory in) the well-worded Prayers composed by others, have a care they meet not with the same Success wherewith

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*Bathyllus* met, for (vainly) assuming to himself the Verses made by *Virgil*. Gal. 6. 3.

Oh ! How few are there (now in *England*) who Glory not in another Man's Line, of things made ready to their Hands, 2 *Cor.* 10. 16.

Again, I Query, whether it be not as absolutely Needful, and as really a Duty (incumbent on all *Adam's* Children), to act (themselves) in the concerns of their immortal Souls, as they do in the concerns of their Bodies: If so, (as beyond all doubt it is) then I desire to be convinc'd wherein I am out of the way, when I say and affirm, that a hungry Man may as rationally trust to another Man's Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, and Cloathing his Body for him, (or in his stead) while he (himself) neglects all these Offices  
for



for the support of his own natural Body.

If any Reply, and say, that I say and affirm (herein) that which is Irrational, because it is a thing Impossible (in Nature) that one Man should Eat, Drink, Sleep, and wear Cloaths for another, seeing that by Nature's Law, every individual Person is to Eat, Drink, Sleep, &c. for himself, and not to trust to the Eating, Drinking, &c. of another.

To this I answer, that by the Law of God's revealed Religion, every Soul (who hopes or desires to be saved) is oblig'd to do and practise (personally, not another for him) the Duties requir'd in Christianity. As every Soul is required to Believe for himself, to Repent for himself, to Hope for himself, &c. So he is as truly oblig'd and bound to Pray for himself, (according to the Ability he

he hath given him of God) ; he is not to Boast in another Man's Line, in things made ready to his Hand : Haft thou Faith ? Have it to thy self before God, *Rom. 14. 22.* So I say of every other Grace and Duty in Christianity : Haft thou this and the other Grace of the Spirit ? Have them to thy self before God, do not trust to, or rest upon those Graces in another : Do not deceive thy self in thinking, (or believing) that God will take that for thy personal Prayer, which was composed by another, and prepared to thy Hand. *Gal. 6. 4.*

Let but this Question be put home to the Conscience of any Rational Man, whose Reason is not swallowed up of the Gulph of Prejudice.

*Quest.* Are you willing that such or such a Learned Dignitary of the Church shall chew your  
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Victuals for you? Tell and keep your Money for you? The answer would be, I Honour and Reverence such and such Dignitaries for their Learning and Office sake; but I must beg their Pardon, if I resolve to chew my Victuals, and tell and keep my Money my self: And wilt thou not shew thy self as greatly Concern'd in the matters of Salvation?

Are not Believing, Repenting, Meditating and Praying, a chewing the spiritual Cud? And wilt thou trust this in the Hands of any Learned Dignitary living to do it for thee? Surely if thou dost, thou sufficiently declarest to God, Angels and Men, that thou puttest a far higher Value on thy Perishing Body, than thou dost on thy Immortal Soul.

Instances of this kind may be Multiplied; but I Proceed to the  
third

third Reason, why it is not Law-ful for (or the Duty of) an a-wakened Sinner to take up with, and to use, Forms of Prayer com-posed by others, and imposed by humane Authority.

Reason 3. Because it apper-tains to none to institute (or appoint) set Forms in Religion, but to him who can also give the inward Spiritual Power, which makes outward Forms accepta-ble.

This very Reason (if Men would shew themselves Rational) might (for ever) stop the Mouths of those who Brag and Boast of the well-composedness of the Form, and the Orthodoxy and Soundness of the Matter of those Prayers which (by humane Au-thority) are imposed.

That which lays such Forms open to Divine Reprehension

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and bespeaks them truly contemptible in the esteem of all who are really acted by the Spirit of Adoption, is, that they are humane Forms, destitute of that divine Virtue and Power which bespeaks all Religious Forms Acceptable and Pleasing to God, and Refreshing, Edifying, and Comforting to the Souls of Believers. To which I add, that the Forms so highly extoll'd, and so (mightily) contended for, they are not the Fruit of those Gifts and Talents, of those who make use of them for their Prayers.

If Believers be exhorted (by God himself) to turn the back on those who retain the Form of Godliness, compos'd and instituted by God himself, when the Power is deny'd ; certainly much more ought Believers to turn away from those who have neither  
Power

Power nor Form of God's own appointment, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.

Reason 4. Because that to Practise the Commandments of Men, and to offer the same (as worship) to God, either for fear of Mens Frowns, or to gain worldly Advantage by so doing, will prove such Persons not only dissembling Hypocrites in Religion, but they will lay themselves open to the Rejection and Blast of God's Mouth, *Esa.* 29. 13. *Mat.* 15. 9.

Reason 5. Because there is not recorded in all the Word of God, any one instance where God impowered or authorized any meer Man (or Men) to Compose Forms of Prayer, and to Impose the same on others for their Prayers.

Now seeing that the written Word of God is the only Rule of a Believer's Faith and Life, it must



must Necessarily (and by unavoidable Consequence) follow that whatever is not therein Recommended either by Precept or Example, it is to be rejected and abhorr'd, and that upon pain of God's rejecting and abhorring us for disobeying his Commands.

Reason 6. Because whatever is not done and practised in Faith, (in serving God) is altogether Abominable to God, because Sinful: Now that which is neither expressly (or by Consequence) commanded by God; nor yet hath any Promise of Acceptance made to it, can never be said to be done or practised in Faith, *Rom. 14. 22. Heb. 11. 6.* Let the Patrons and Pleaders for such compos'd and stinted Forms of Prayers, either shew wherein all the Word of God such Forms are warranted, or where God hath made any Promise of Accepting

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cepting them, or else let them (ingeniously) own that I have the Truth on my side.

Against the Reasons (here) laid down to overthrow stinted Forms of Prayer, several things are Objected. I will reduce them (for brevity sake) to Six Particulars, to each of which I will (in Christ's Strength) Reply Faithfully and Honestly, according to God's Word, and the Experience God hath blest me with.

*Object. 1. The Scriptures have laid down a set Form of Prayer, and Commands the same to be used, Luke 11. 2. When ye Pray; say, Our Father, &c.*

*Ans.* In Two Particulars.

*First*, By way of Dilemma, thus, Either it was the Mind of Christ, that that Form of Words should be

be impos'd on Believers as their Prayer, or it was not?

One of these must (unavoidably) be Granted.

If it was, then it (necessarily) follows, that all Believers (as well as some) are bound up to that Form: Now it lyes at the Objecter's Door, to Prove that ever any of the Apostles or Primitive Believers of that First (and Best) Age of the Gospel Church, ever used that Form of Words for their Prayer (*Totidem verbis*) in so many words.

If it was not the Mind of Christ that that Form of Words should be impos'd on Believers as a Yoke of Duty, how Ignorant of the Scriptures are such Objecters?

*Secondly*, By way of Explication of that misunderstood and abused Text; most certain it is (I hope to Die in the Faith of it) that the Mind of Christ in that

Text, to the Believers then was, and to us now) is, that both they and we should take that Form of Words for a standing general Rule or Platform, according to which he would have all Believers (to the end of the World) to frame their Prayers.

I will lay down Four Arguments to Prove what I have Asserted to be the Mind and Design of Christ in that Text.

*Arg. 1.* The different variety of Expression in which the Two Evangelists set down that Form of Words. *First*, In the very Entrance upon that Form, *Luke* saying, *When ye Pray, say, Our Father, &c. Luke 11. 2.* *Matthæw* saying, *When ye Pray, say after this manner, &c. Mat. 6. 9.* *Secondly*, In that these Two Evangelists vary in sundry words in setting down this Form. For Example, *Luke* he omits (or leaves out) the  
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Doxology ; *Matthew* hath it. *Matthew* hath, *Give us this day our daily bread.* *Luke* hath, *Give us day by day our daily bread.* *Matthew* hath, *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* *Luke* hath, *Forgive us our sins, &c.*

Had it been the Mind of Christ that Believers should be tied up to that Form of Words, (in Praying) the unerring Spirit (whereby the Two Evangelists were acted) would have been more exact and accurate in setting down the Words of that Form. But the Design of Christ being (only) to lay down a General Rule (or Platform) according to which he would have Believers to frame their Prayers, there was not that Regard had to the placing of the words, as otherwise would have been, had it been his will, that that Form of Words should be used by Believers as their Prayer ; but

64      -      *A Discourse of*  
the Words being design'd (only)  
as a General Rule (or Platform)  
of Prayer, what was omitted by  
one Evangelist, is supply'd in the  
other.

*Argument* 2. The shortness of  
that Form, in reaching the several  
Cases of every Believer (in  
Particular) is a convincing Argument,  
that the Wisdom of  
Christ never design'd that Form  
of Words to be impos'd on Believers  
as their Prayer.

It is certain, that the Case and  
Condition of Believers, (while in  
a State of Imperfection) is various  
and changeable; so must their  
Prayers be. It would be altogether  
Inconsistent with the Wisdom  
and Faithfulness of Christ to  
tye up Believers to any Prayer or  
Prayers (whatever) which are  
not full to the Purpose, in Sui-  
ting or Answering the Particular  
Case of every Believer.

This



This is plain from the Practise of God's Church (in all Ages) who always suited her Prayers to her present Condition she was in: Read what is set down in 1 Kings 8. 38. *What prayer or supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own Heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house. Then hear thou in Heaven, &c.*

By this Scripture now Quoted, and many more which may be offer'd to the same Purpose out of the Old Testament, it is most evident, that the Church had no such thing as a set or stinted Liturgy by which she Prayed.

From this I do (most rationally) infer, that if the Church of God was (while in the State of her Minority) enabled to Pray without a set or stinted Liturgy, it must (unavoidably) be the  
D 4                      highest

highest Reflection upon, and the greatest Dishonour (imaginable) to the Son of God; that his Church being (now come to the State of Manhood, (in Spirituall) and being so (plentifully) enricht with those Gifts of the Spirit, which he Purchas'd for, and Bequeath'd to his Spouse at his Ascension, shou'd be less able to make her Addresses to God, then she was in her State of Nonage before his coming in the Flesh.

Agreeing herewith is that of *Paul, Eph. 6. 18. Praying alway with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance and Supplication for all Saints.*

This Scripture, with many more (of the same Import) in the New Testament, makes it plain, (beyond all Contradiction) that in the Apostolical Days there was no such thing as a stated and stinted Liturgy.

turgy. But the Apostles and Primitive Churches did frame their Prayers according to their Present Circumstances they were in, which leads me to a Third Argument, to Confirm the Truth of that Sense and Explication I have given of the so much abused Text, (above mention'd) *Luke* 11. 2.

*Argument 3.* The Example and Practise of Christ (himself) and his Holy Apostles, who (beyond all Contradiction) framed their Prayers according to the Present Occasion they had in Hand; a few Instances (hereof) may be seen on Record.

*First*, When Christ Design'd to Raife *Lazarus*, (by Miracle) he did not use those Words--*Our Father*, &c. nor yet any stined Liturgy, but framed his Petitions to God his Father according to the Design he had in Hand,

Jo. 11. 41, 42. *And Jesus lift up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee, &c.*

Again, when in that Bitter Agony (in the Garden), *He fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible let this Cup pass from me: Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

And when he comes to give the finishing stroak to the Work of our Redemption on the Cross, *He cry'd with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, Lamasabacthani, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

And a little before his Suffering, when he puts up his most Solemn and Heavenly Prayer for his Disciples, (and all other Believers to the end of the World) it is evident he did not use the Form of Words, so much Boasted of by the Advocates of Liurgies, and stunted Forms of Prayers,

ers, but frames his Incomparable (and most) Excellent Prayer to his Father, according to the present Occasion: This appears in the 17th Chap. of *John* to the end. And albeit he did not (on any of the above mentioned Occasions) make use of the Form above mentioned, yet it is not to be Questioned, but that he framed all his Prayers according to that General Rule (or Platform) of Prayer laid down by himself, which is the thing I contend for; which if Granted by the Adversaries, (as I cannot see how they can avoid it) the Chief Hold and Refuge they have to fly to is blown up, and they themselves (being driven from that hold) put to their shifts to fly to (and take Sanctuary under) the shadow of the Churches pretended Power, from which (I doubt not) I shall be enabled (by him who

is

is the Head and King of the Church) to beat them, forcing them to quit that hold (also) as they have done the former. As the Scriptures make it plain that Christ himself did not (on any of the above mention'd Occasions) use the Form so mightily contended for; but did (as hath already been observed) frame all his Prayers to the several Occasions which lay before him, so his Holy Apostles did (by the unerring Instinct of the Holy Ghost) follow the Blessed Example of their Lord and Masters practise in this very matter.

Two most plain Instances (of this Truth) we find on Record, the one is the Occasion they had of choosing an Apostle to succeed in the room of Judas the Traitor, Acts 1. 24, 25. *And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew*  
*us*



whether of the two thou hast chosen, &c. The other is the Occasion they had of chusing Deacons, *Acts* 6. 6. In neither of which, (nor in the Prayer they put up to God against their Persecutors, in *Acts* 4. 24. to Ver. 32. did they use the Form of Words in *Luke* 11. 2. but did frame their Prayers to sute the matter in hand.

Argument 4. The Fourth Argument shall be the Command of Christ, to shun and avoid *Tautologies* and *vain Repetitions*, *Mat.* 6. 7. *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the Heathens do: For they think they shall be heard for their much speaking, &c.*

Now what can be more plain than that such Men Prove themselves (excreably) Guilty of vain Repetitions, who multiply words in their Prayers, repeating the very same words over and over (even  
to

to weariness ) and concluding the several little snips of Prayers and Responds, wherewith the Liturgy abounds with, *Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.* and that several times in the same Morning and Evening Service.

I speak not these things out of Prejudice to the *English* Nation, or to Affront the Governors thereof, who are such great Countenancers of the Vanity I am now Decrying. But from the Sense of that Duty I owe to the offended Majesty of God, whose Presence and Gospel are now ready to take Wing, in order to their Departing from a Nation who have been so many Years hardening themselves against God in the ways of Sin and Folly. But more especially their refusing to lay the Neck under the Yoke of his Son's Gospel Government,  
faring

fearing least (thereby) they should let the Statutes of *Omri* fall into Contempt, and so the Foundation of their own Sensual Kingdom come to be not only shaken, but even quite overthrown.

I say, from a Sense of the Duty I owe to God, and the great Love and honourable Respect I have for Poor, Languishing, Bleeding *England*, and the Government thereof, I deal thus plainly; if any Son of Violence offers to lay a Persecuting Hand upon me for the Plainness and Faithfulness, (here used) both for God, and the Kingdoms Good, let such know, that through God's Rich Grace to me, (the unworthiest of saved Sinners) I shall be found fitter for a Prison, than he (or they) will be for the Impending Judgments of God, which threaten to lay the Land

Ob-

*Object.* 2. That Prayer which is Extemporary, is, to them who Hear and Join in it, a Form.

I answer to this Objection in Two Particulars.

*First*, That which is not a Form in it self, is not a Form to any.

Prayer conceived and made by the abilities given by God, is (to the People) the Benefit of a Gift bestowed for their Edification.

That (only) can be called a Form of Prayer which a Man useth, (as such) and to the use of which he tieth himself up. The Nature of a Form of Prayer depends on the use of it. No Man is (in Praying) tied up to the Words of the Minister.

*Secondly*, Peoples joining together with him that Prays according to the ability given him (by God) for Edification, is a Duty.

This

This Objection is vain and frivolous.

*Objection 3.* Every one hath not the Spirit to help him to Pray. And therefore such must be holpen by Forms of Devotion.

Hereto I shall Reply in Three Particulars.

*First,* They who are by Faith united to Jesus Christ, they have the Spirit of Adoption, which enables them to Pray, (Believingly) why should they be hindered, and by Humane Laws Persecuted for not using a Form?

*Secondly,* Such as have not the Spirit of Christ, will never get it by Using and Pleading for Humane Forms of Prayers. I have already shewn how that that which is not (it self) an Ordinance of God, appointed for Converting Sinners to Christ, will never bring a Soul to God.

*Third-*

*Thirdly*, Though the Persons intended in the Objection, have not the Spirit of Christ (savingly) in them, to enable them to Pray, yet they have a share of the common Gifts of the Spirit, whereby they are render'd capable of Praying to God for the Spirit. The very Light of Nature teaches Men to put up Prayers to God, according to the Danger they apprehend themselves to be in; this is Evident from the Practise of those Hea-then Mariners in *Jonah* 5. 6. from which I observe, that where and when a Poor Sinner finds himself pinched with the Sight and Sense of his Misery, he will not want words to Cry, and to Beg for Relief.

In Case a poor Beggar be both Hungry and Naked, be reduced to such Extremity (of Misery), as that he perceives Nature in a  
sink.



sinking starving Condition, can any Man (Rationally) think, that such a Man stands in need of a Monitor to Instruct (or Teach) him what words to use in Begging? surely it must be granted, that sinking starving Nature is the best Monitor in such a Case.

Oh! If we could (once) but startle and awaken Dead Sinners out of their Damning Security, by the Terrors of God's Law set home on the Conscience, so as that they once become apprehensive of the Miserable Cursed State they are in; How busie and active would Natural Conscience be in throwing off that sloth and security of the Soul, in which the Generality of *England's* Professors, both Nonconformists and Conformists, are in danger of Perishing Eternally: How soon would Nature be call'd in to the Relief of the Wounded, Bleeding Soul? The Man's Knowledge,

ledge, his Wit, his Memory, his Tongue, his Lips, his All must hasten in to help the Awakened Guilty Sinner, to make a Prayer suited to the Distressed, Deplorable Condition he feels himself to be in.

All that can be expected from the Forms contended for, is, that they make Secure, Dead Sinners, more Dead and Secure; in that the Using and Practising them will take the poor Sinners off from improving the Gifts of Nature, and lulling the Hypocritical Formalist in such a deep sleep of Security and vain Confidence of the Goodness and Happiness of his Condition, as nothing short of some amazing Judgment (from above), or the unquenchable Flames of Hell, will awaken the Sinner out of,

*Objection 4.* A stated Liturgy is a good help to weak Ministers, &c.

To this I Answer in Three Particulars.

*First*, It is most certain, that by the Law of Christ, no Man is to be accounted capable of the Sacred Office of the Ministry, but that Man who is (by the Spirit of Christ) fitted (in measure) for so Sacred an Office, 2 Tim. 2. 2.

*And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

As to send an ignorant and insufficient Person on an Ambassage, would reflect great dishonour on the King who sends him; so it reflects great dishonour on the Lord Jesus Christ, to have ignorant and insufficient Men put into the Office of the Ministry,

2 Tim.

2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God might be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work.*

Secondly, Stinted Forms (of Prayer) are so far from helping weak Ministers, that they are rather a means of encreasing and feeding a Spirit of Sloth and Laziness, which is to be (carefully) shun'd and watcht against. He that hath no Gift and Parts at all, he is not fit for the Work of the Ministry: He who hath but Ordinary Gifts, he ought to stir up and improve those Gifts that they might grow. 2 Tim. 1. 6 *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the laying on of my hands.*

The tying Ministers up to stin-  
ted Forms, will rather cherish and  
increase their Weakness, than a-  
ny way help to remove it.

Let that Text in *Mat.* 25. 29. be  
consulted, *For unto every man that*  
*hath, shall be given, and he shall*  
*have abundance; but from him that*  
*hath not, shall be taken away, even*  
*that which he hath.*

The best Expositors (on this  
Text) do understand by hath,  
the Faithful and Diligent Im-  
provement of the Gifts and Ta-  
lents which a Man hath, by Im-  
proving them according to *Prov.*  
*10. 4.* By hath not, they under-  
stand that improves not.

*Thirdly*, Let it be seriously con-  
sider'd, that for a Minister to go  
(always) on his Religious  
atches (as stinced Forms are  
by the Patrons of them Stiled)  
it is the way for himself, and his  
flock, (which Resolves to follow  
him

him in his Practise) never to get or be acquainted with the Spirit of Prayer ; and in them will be fulfilled that terrible Scripture, *Hosea 4. 9. And there shall be like People, like Priest. And I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their doings.* The People as well as the Minister, who will not hear of (or endure) the Spirit of Prayer, God will (judicially) smite them with Spiritual Barrenness. And God knows, *England* (at this day) abounds herewith.

By Reason of such judicial smittings as this, *Israel* (of old) became an empty Vine which produced no Fruit, which the Holy One of *Israel* could delight in, or accept *Hosea 10. 1.* This day is the Scripture fulfilled in *England* ; though the Patrons and Advocates for stunted Forms of Prayer, (the chief Occasion of *England's* Barrenness



renness to God) will not endure to hear of it.

These Crutches (to use their own Comparison) have been used ever since the Church of *England's* Separation from the Apostatical Synagogue of *Rome*. Had the Church of *England* thrown away those Crutches, and left them where they found them, *England* had been a Happy, a Blessed *England* this day. But as *Ephraim* (of old) was joined to Idols, so the Church of *England* is joined to these Crutches; and when she will learn (or strive) to go without them, God (only) knows.

*Object. 5.* It is judged fit that a stinted Liturgy should be (generally) impos'd for Uniformity-sake in Religion, and for Preserving Peace in the Church.

*Ans.* This Objection Consists of Two Members, (or Branches)

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to

to each of which I will Reply (distinctly) in their order.

*First*, For the sake of Uniformity in Religion.

To this First Branch of the Objection, I Answer in Three Particulars.

*First*, For every Pastor to Recommend to his Flock the Spirit of Prayer, and to teach them the Absolute Necessity of getting it, and of uniting firmly and zealously in opposing the Statutes of *Omri*, *Micah* 6. 16. And standing up (as one Man) to maintain the instituted Worship of Christ in all the several parts of it, is the Uniformity (in Religion) which must keep *England* from being spewed out of God's Mouth; such an Uniformity as this is promis'd in *Zach.* 14. 9. *And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name shall be one.*

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The Uniformity here Promised, is that Mutual Agreement between those Nations and People whom God will gather to himself, whose Hearts and Affections he will firmly unite (in the latter Days) to depose Idolatry and Superstition, and to join themselves together to Worship God with such a Pure and Spiritual Worship, as He himself hath instituted and appointed in Gospel Times, *Mal. i. ii. Jo. 4. 24.*

*Secondly,* If an Uniformity in stinted Forms of Prayer be judged fit, Why not (also) an Uniformity in stinted Forms of Sermons, and set and stated Homilies? The one is as Rational as the other. Now in Case a Minister should always Preach (or rather Repeat) the very same Sermon, the People would neither be advanced in knowledge, nor would they be pleased with

such an idle and lazy Practice. Why then should there not be the same dislike shewn in the business of Prayer?

*Thirdly*, The tying up Ministers to such set and stunted Forms, is the greatest Injury and Harm to the Souls of both Ministers and People that can be.

This will appear in Three Particulars.

*First*, It is a great hindrance to a Minister, in that such a Practice takes him off from his Study. For if he must be tied up to a stunted Form of Words, (either in Praying or Preaching) made ready to his Hand, what need he take any pains in Study? The Spirit of God enjoins on Ministers that they Study and take Pains to grow in Spiritual Gifts, that their profiting (in the Mystery of Godliness) might appear to all.

1 *Tim.* 4. 13, 14, 15.

*Secondly*, This Practice (necessarily)

family) binds up the Minister's Talents, (if any he hath left him) in a Napkin, and so lays him open to be cast out for an unfaithful and an unprofitable Servant, *Mat. 25. 25, 30.*

*Thirdly,* This Practice brings and continues a Spiritual Barrenness on the People, in that it robs their Souls of the Benefit of Ministerial Gifts. The Apostle assures us, that the Manifestation of the Spirit is given to every Man to Profit withal, *1 Cor. 12. 7.* Now in Case Ministers must not be allow'd to Exercise and Improve their own Ministerial Gifts, how can their People be otherwise than (grossly) Ignorant in the Mysteries of Gospel Religion? Let such Ministers who (willingly) subject their Consciences to such unreasonable and intollerable Yokes of Mens laying on them, Consider and Tremble at those

Scriptures, *Mal.* 2. 7, 8. *Hosea* 4. 6. *Mat.* 15. 14.

*Branch* 2. For securing Peace in the Church.

To this I Answer in Three Particulars.

*First*, The Event of imposing stinted Forms of Prayers makes it plain and evident (to every discerning Eye) that the Forms imposed are not according to the revealed Will of God.

Whatever (in its self) tends to rend and tear the Hearts and Affections of Magistrates from their Subjects, and of the Subjects from their Magistrates, that can never be prov'd the Ordinance of God.

Too Evident it is, that the violence which (in former Reigns) hath been used and practised in imposing Liturgies and stinted Forms of Prayer, hath not only exasperated the Spirit of the

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Magistrates against the best of their Subjects, but it hath greatly alienated the Hearts and Affections of those Subjects from their Magistrates; and if this be the way to Secure Peace, for my part I do not know what Peace is. No Man (of common Sence) will call a continued Persecution (for Conscience sake) Peace, or the way to promote it, either in Church or State.

*Secondly*, The imposing such stinted Forms of Prayers, (by Force and Violence) is altogether Repugnant to the Law of Charity. And that which is so, can never be the way either to procure, or to secure, Peace.

They who have no regard to practise the Golden Rule laid down by Christ in *Mat. 7. 12.* *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye the same unto them,* it will

be altogether vain for such to expect right Peace; a negative Peace such may (for a time) enjoy, but true and real Peace they will remain Strangers to while their Necks, refuse to stoop to the Yoke of the Prince of Peace, *Esa. 59. 8. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths, whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.*

Let not that Person, Family, or Nation, expect Peace, while their Hearts refuse to embrace the Truth of God, as it is in Jesus. That Peace which proceeds not from a Cordial Reception of the Truth in Faith and Love, it will (in the end) prove but a Bastard Peace. And they who boast of such a Peace, will be found no better than Self-Deceivers, *Esa. 57. 21. Luke 10. 6.*

*Third-*

*Thirdly*, The imposing stinted Forms of Prayer (contrary to the Law of Charity) instead of procuring or securing Peace (either in Church or Civil State), it will produce in the People (who submit to such Impositions), Four sad and wretched Effects, which will at length (if not prevented by the abused Grace and miraculous Power of God) end in the overthrow of the Nation.

*First*, It will end in growing Ignorance. Ignorance (I mean) in the Mysteries of Godliness; wherein whoever abounds and continues, (especially if their Ignorance be wilful and affected) they mark themselves out for the Vengeance of God, *Esa. 27. 11.*

*For it is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them, will have no mercy on them: and he that formed them, will shew them no favour. 2 Thes. 1. 8. In*

*flaming fire taking vengeance on them who know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Secondly, Blind Zeal, which is (alway) a Fruit of Ignorance, and is like a Fire in a wrong place of the House. It is (alway) observed that the most ignorant (in the Mysteries of Gospel Religion) are the most violent in opposing the Spirituality of the Gospel, and persecuting the Professors and Defenders of it. This is (by some) accounted Zeal for the Church, and true Loyalty to the Government: But whatever such Bigotted Zealots think or say of it, time will prove that it is a Fire which will bring Destruction on the Land. Such Zeal as this is no better than God-provoking Persecution; which in Pretence and Colour of serving God, and obeying Authority, is a making*  
*Havock*

Havock of God's Heritage in the Land. This is a fulfilling the Words which Christ foretold in the Days of his Flesh, *Jo. 16. 2.* *They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, shall think that he doth God service.* Let such Zealots Ponder and Consider what the meaning of that Scripture is, *Psal. 7. 13.* *He hath prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.*

*Thirdly,* Formality in Worshipping God, this is ever a Concomitant of Humane Impositions in God's Worship; and so Epidemical is it grown in *England*, that it hath not only crept into the Purest Churches of Protestant Dissenters, but even into the Prayers and Sermons of the most Orthodox Preachers in the Nation: And he who sees it not to be

be so, is (most certainly) a stranger both to his Professing Neighbours, and likewise to his own Spirit. God help us all to bewail this God-provoking Sin before it prove too late.

There is (of late) the Hue and Cry raised against gross Immoralities, which (like an overflowing Deluge) seems to cover the Face of the Nation, but there's very little notice taken of that spreading and growing Formality, which (like a Gangrene) is eating into the very Bowels of Power and Purity of Gospel Religion. We have all (both Nonconformists and Conformists) a great and shining Name (and Appearance) of being Alive to God; but 'tis greatly to be feared, that the most lively Protestants in *England* will be found too too Dead and Lukewarm, when Christ comes to search *England*



land by his (fire-like) Judgments,  
2 Tim. 3. 5. *Having a form of  
godliness, but denying the power  
thereof.* Rev. 3. 2. *Thou hast a  
name that thou livest, and thou art  
dead.*

It were a Mercy to the Land,  
if those Studies and Sermons  
which are design'd for carrying  
on a Work of Reformation, were  
turn'd into the Right Channel,  
(viz.) a Strenuous and Zealous  
Preaching up the Nature and ab-  
solute Necessity of Regeneration;  
a thing to which the generality  
of England's Professors are as  
great Strangers as *Nicodemus* was,  
Jo. 3. 3. Some have been fam'd  
(exceedingly) and cry'd up for  
None-such, when their (Thun-  
der-like) Sermons have startled,  
and (for some time) stirr'd gross  
Prophanelings up to reform their  
Lives, on which very account,  
many (now in Hell) (I questi-  
on

on not) and a great many (now Living) have passed, and do (now) pass Currant for real Converts; whereas they were never brought to know (Experimentally) what true Conversion means, or wherein it consists. I have often said, that those Preachers who make a greater noise than their Neighbours, in rousing Men up to Reformation (leaving them Ignorant of the Mystery of the New Birth) they do but fill Churches and Kingdoms with shining Hypocrites. And whether this will not help to ripen a Land for Judgment, I leave to the Judicious (in Christianity) to Judge. Not that I Design to discourage any from endeavouring carrying on a Work of Reformation in Manners; but my Design is rather to shew and wish that Ministers wou'd rather employ their Talents in awaken-

ing Sinners to effectual Conversion, leaving that Work of External Reformation (in manner) to the Civil Magistrate, whose Work and Office it is, *Rom. 13.* 3, 4. There is no Reformation but that which flows from saving Conversion, will meeten Sinners for the Communion of Christ.

And therefore I humbly Conceive it to be a great Weakness in the generality of *England's* Ministers (who are called to Pastoral Office) that they Preach so seldom on, and meddle so little with the Subject of Regeneration, (or the New Birth) ; an Argument (say some) that they are either Strangers to the thing themselves ; or else, that they take for granted, that all they Preach to are (already) in a Regenerate State, and so stand in need of building-up Sermons only.

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To such I say only this, that it will be well for such Churches, if the same Charge brought in against the Church of *Sardis*, *Rev.* 3. 1, 4. and the Church of *Laodicea*, *ver.* 17. be not brought in against them.

*Fourthly*, Hating, Envyng, and Persecuting those who differ from them, be they never so Holy and Upright in their Walk and Conversation. It is (at this Day) in *England*, as it was (of Old) in *Israel*; *Ephraim* envied *Judah*, and *Judah* vexed *Ephraim*; the ground of which clashing and opposing each other, was the difference between them in the Matters of God's Worship. *Ephraim*, and the other Nine Tribes which joined with him in Espousing the Idolatries and Superstitious Inventions of *Jeroboam*, they were (by far) the greater Number, they being ten Tribes, and

and *Judah* but Two. As great odds as is (at this Day) between the Imposers of stinted Forms of Worship, and those who dislike and oppose such unjust impositions. *Judah*, tho' (by far) the smaller Number, yet retain'd the Purity of God's Worship, refusing to Conform to (or to approve of) those Idolatries and Superstitions of *Jeroboam*, which the Ten Tribes had fallen in love with; and this was the Reason why Poor *Judah* became the Object of *Ephraim's* Envy. If this be not the Case of Nonconformists and Conformists in *England* (at this day) I am greatly mistaken. Let those (in these Kingdoms) who have joined together in Espousing the Corruptions of the *Jeroboam* of *Rome*, who are yet desirous to retain the Name of Reformed Protestants) Ponder (most seriously)

*Hosea*

*Hosea 11. last verse, Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: But Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints. Let all (be their Numbers and outward strength what it will) who Envy and Persecute the Pure Worshipers of God, read what the God of Truth (who cannot Lie) hath said shall come upon them, Esa. 11. 13. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. When the Imposers of stunted Forms of Worship grow weary and ashamed of these things, and are made (Cordially) to reconcile to those they now Envy and Persecute, and that by owning and embracing the Pure Worship and Ordinances of Christ, which (hitherto) they have branded with the odious*



term of Phanaticism, *Judah* shall no more vex *Ephraim*, but cheerfully Embrace them as Brethren, and go hand in hand in advancing the true Protestant Interest, against all the combined Powers of *Rome* and Hell.

*Object.* 6. Christ hath given Power to his Church to Institute and Appoint whatever may make for her own Edification and Peace, *Mat.* 18. 18.

*Ans.* In Two Particulars.

*Ans. First,* They who deny the Church (to which Christ spoke in (*Mat.* 18. 18.) to be a Congregational Church of visible Professing Saints, call'd out of the Fellowship of the Ignorant Unbelieving World, by the Spirit and Word of Christ, to subject themselves under Christ their Mystical Head and King, to walk in Church Fellowship, Worshiping God, and Building up themselves

selves in their most Holy Faith, according to the Rules prescrib'd by Christ himself in his Word, they will sooner or later be convinced of their mistake thereabout.

*Secondly*, The Power given by Christ to his instituted Churches (under the Gospel) is a Power of Trust (only), not a Power of instituting New Ordinances of Worship; to Institute and Appoint both the Matter and Manner of Divine Worship, belongs to Christ the Head and King of his Church. Subjection and Obedience to his Institutions and Appointments, belongs to the Subjects of his Kingdom the Church, *Deut.* 18. 18, 19. *Prov.* 30. 5, 6. It is in this Sense *Paul* is to be Understood, where he calls the Church the Pillar and Ground of Truth, *1 Tim.* 3. 5. on the account of the Trust wherewith the Lord Jesus hath honoured and dig-

dignified his Churches, to keep Pure (from Mens defilements) the Doctrines and Institutions in Divine Worship, which he de'vered from his Father; for thus doing, *Paul* (highly) commends the Church in *Corinth*, 1. *Cor.* 11. 2. And *Christ* himself (for the like Practice) commends the Church of *Philadelphia*, *Rev.* 3. 10. He never yet did (nor ever will) commend any Person, (or Church) for adding to his Institutions, but rather the contrary. It was for such Whorish Tricks as these, that God denied the Jewish Church to be his Wife, and for which he threatned to strip her, and make her bare, *Hosea* 2. 2, 3. The Apostatical Synagogue of *Rome* remains (as yet) under the odious Character of Whore of *Babylon*, and Mother of Harlots, for blending the Doctrine of God's Grace deliver'd  
by

by Christ (the Messenger of his Holy Covenant.) I wish those Meretricious and Spurious Doctrines of her own and the Devil's devising; and her imposing on the World, a Pompous, Carnal Worship, which God hates as truly, as a Sober and a Godly Man hates and loaths the paint and garish Dress, with the wanton and lascivious Looks and Actions, whereby his Wife Allures and Tempts other Lovers to his Bed, may be expos'd to Con-tempt. Let all *Rome's* Advocates (who plead for her Inventions in God's Worship) look to it and in time Consider how they can avoid being stil'd the Children of such a Catholick Strumpet notwithstanding that partial and mincing Separation which they pretend to make from her Communion: The Separation which some (in our Days) do make

make from *Rome*, is like the shaving of a Man's Beard, what is outward and offensive to the Eye is cut off, but the stumps of it remain inhering in the flesh still. The gross Idolatry of *Rome* is (seemingly at least) cast off, and renounced by too many who are very fond of her Superstition, who ('tis to be fear'd) will (when Opportunity serves) open a Door to her gross Idolatry, rather than part with her (God-provoking) Superstition, which they so dearly love.

So much in Answer to the most material Objections brought in by the Patrons and Imposers of printed Forms of Prayer.

I now proceed to Resolve the fifth Question about Prayer.

*Quest. 5.* Whether doth an Extemporary Gift of Prayer belie or prove a Man to be in state of Saving Grace?

To

To this Question I Answer in the Negative (*viz.*) That a Gift of Prayer doth not Bespeak (or Prove) a Man to be in a State of saving Grace.

For (as I have already observed) most certain it is that a formal Hypocrite, who is and will (for ever) remain a Stranger to Regeneration, may have such Measures of the common Gifts of the Spirit of God, as may render him Capable of out-stripping (or out-doing) in Praying and Preaching, &c. the most Holy Believer Living; and all by the strength of the common Gifts of the Spirit, such as Notional (or Brain) Knowledge, quick Invention, great Memory, volubility of Speech, and the like; neither of which common Gifts can reach the Heart to Renew and Change it.

The



These common Gifts flow not from any vital Union between Christ and Hypocrites, but are from the common Operation of the Holy Ghost; who dispenceth his common Gifts, to whom (and in what Measure) he pleaseth, 1 Cor. 12. 8, 9, 10. Heb. 6. 4, 5.

*Ques.* 6. What is that Spirit of Prayer which is the Infallible Character of a Regenerate Soul?

*Ans.* It is that Spirit of Grace, and Supplication, which God promised he would pour forth on the Elect; intended, by the House of *David*, and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, *Zack.* 12. 9, 10. And hereof that Anointing pour'd forth on *Aaron* (the Type of Christ, every true Believer's High Priest) was Typical, and Shaddowy. The material Oyl power'd forth on *Aaron* did (in a Type) represent the Effusion of the Gift, and Graces of God the Father, pour'd forth on the Human Nature assum'd by his Son, and taken into Union with his own Godhead.) *Psal.* 89. 20. *I have found David my Servant, with my Holy Oyl have I anointed Him.* Hence it is that Christ (the Son) is styl'd, *God the Father's anointed.* *Psal.* 133. 2.

The Oynment descending from the Head of *Aaron*, to his Beard; and from thence to the Skirts of his Garments: Did (Typically) shaddow forth, that Spiritual anointing, which descends from Christ (on the

Souls of his Elect) in Effectual Calling. First it descends firstly and originally (from the Father) upon his Son; and, Secondly, From him, to all his Members in effectual Calling. *John. 1. 1, 6. And of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace. 2 Cor. 1. 22. Now he which stablisheth us with you, in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us, and given the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts. The Spirit of Prayer, whereby every true Believer is enabled to cry Abba Father; is an essential Part of the Earnest given into the Heart of the Regenerate believing Soul in saving Conversion.*

*Rom. 8. 15. For ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

*Gal. 4. 6. And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Heart, crying, Abba, Father.*

The Spirit here called, the Spirit of Adoption, and the Spirit of the Son, is no other than the Holy Ghost, that Comforter, which Christ (before he ascended) promised, he would send to supply the want of his fleshly Presence. *John 14. 16. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the World cannot receive; because it seeth him not, neither*

*neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

This Spirit is said to make Intercession for Beleivers, *Rom. 8. 26. Likewise the Spirit it also helpeth our Infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for, as we ought. But the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us with Groanings which cannot be uttered.*

Not that the Holy Ghost doth invade the Office of the Lord Jesus Christ (whose peculiar Work it is) to Pray and Intercede for God's Elect, as by *ver. 44. of this Chapter*, and other Places, appears: But he is said to Intercede for Beleivers, when he stirs up, and puts the Beleiver on Praying for himself.

There are two things (especially about which the Spirits Efficiency is conversant in a Beleiver's Praying.

*First*, About the Subject-matter of Prayer.

By this three things are intended,

*First*, The Right knowing of the State of Sin and Misery, into which *Adam's Fall* and *postacy* cast all Mankind. This Knowledge is fetch'd from the Law, and the Prophets; and the way the Spirit takes to make the same known, is by writing the Law of God in the Heart; according to God's Promise in *Jer. 31. 33. I will put my Law in their inward Part; and I will write it in their Heart.*

Of such renewed Souls as these, it is that *David* speaks in *Psal.* 37. 30. *The Mouth of the Righteous spealeth Wisdom, and his Tongue talketh of Judgment; the Law of God is in his Heart, none of his Steps shall slide.*

The Law of God being thus written in the Heart, and the Holy Ghost dwelling there too, there is nothing relating to Sin (which is to be confessed, and bewailed) but to the other Duties whereto the Law obliges, but the Believer is (by the teaching of the Holy Ghost) led into the Knowledge of them.

*Secondly,* The Sovereign Help and Comfort laid up in Christ, and held forth in the Promises of the Gospel to Relieve and Succour poor distressed dying Sinners.

Out of both these Books, the Law and the Gospel, the Holy Ghost supplies the poor weak Believer with apt and fit Words in Praying.

Now to that Sinner who is not acted (and taught) by the Holy Ghost; as the Law (spiritually understood) is a Book sealed, which he (in his natural State) cannot understand (or be reconcil'd to) *Esa.* 29. 14. *Rom.* 8. 7. *1 Cor.* 2. 14.

So the Gospel (of God's Grace) is a hidden Mystery, which the Reason of an unregenerate Man can neither reach, nor

## *Right Prayer.*

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be reconciled to, according to 2 Cor. 4. 3-  
But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that  
are lost, &c. And 1 Cor. 2. 11. For what  
Man knoweth, save the Spirit of a Man that is  
in him, even so the things of God knoweth no  
Man, but the Spirit of God.

The Elect of God (only) are blest with  
his high and inestimable Privilege, to be  
taught, (out of these two Books) wherein  
their Misery, and their Help, and Recove-  
ry lies, according to Esa. 54. 13. And all  
thy Children shall be taught of God, and great  
shall be the Peace of thy Children; and Jo. 6.  
5. It is written in the Prophets, and they shall  
all be taught of God; every Man therefore  
that hath heard, and hath learned of the Fa-  
ther cometh unto me.

An unregenerate Man (I grant) may  
by the common Illumination, and Gifts of  
the Spirit) see so far into both Law and  
Gospel, as from the Letter of the one, and  
so of the other, he may be furnisht with  
good Expressions in Prayer; but being de-  
stitute of the Spirit of Adoption, wherein  
such a Man excel a well taught Parot?  
I have known some Parots which have  
imitated a Humane Voice so exactly, that  
they have been taken for Men at a distance.  
A natural Man (having the common Gifts  
of the Spirit) may pass (among Men) for  
a Praying Member of Christ, and yet be  
but a painted Sepulchre.

*Thirdly*, The end to which Prayer is to be ultimately directed.

This lies in two things, (especially) First, the glorifying God above all, *Mat. 6. 9. Hallowed be thy Name, &c. 1 Cor. 10. 31. Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.*

None of Adam's Children can aim at (or design) the Glory of God, but he who is (savingly) taught, and guided by the Holy Ghost.

As all unregenerate Men do act (in serving God) from their own Strength, they never look higher than themselves. *Zach. 7. 5. Speak unto all the People of the Land, and to the Priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh Month, even those seventy Years did ye at a fast unto me, even to me?*

And when ye did eat, and when ye drank, Did ye not eat, and did ye not drink for your selves? *Psal. 78. 18. They tempted God in their Hearts, by asking Meat for the Lust. Ja. 4. 3. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye might consume on your Lusts.*

Secondly, The encreasing and carrying on the Work of Sanctification, this is another end to which Prayer must be directed. Prayer, and all other Duties of Religion they are but Vehicles, (or Chariots) in which the Soul of the true Believer is carried.



ry'd out to meet, and converse with God; by which means the Sanctification begun (in effectual calling) is maintain'd, and carried on.

These two Ends, to which Prayer is to be (ultimately) directed, no man can regard, so as to design them, (in praying) but that Man who is taught, and led by the Holy Ghost.

*Secondly*, The other Particular, about which the Spirit's Efficiency is conversant, (in a Believer's Praying) is the Manner, as the Holy Ghost directs, and teaches the Believer about the subject Matter of Prayer; so he teaches and helps the Believer about the Manner, how he is to Pray.

The right manner of Praying designs five things, in each of which the Holy Ghost doth sweetly, and powerfully teach, and assist the true Believer.

*First*, He acts on the Will and Affections, to act obediently towards God, about the Matter contain'd in the Believer's Prayer.

The influence of the Holy Ghost on the Will and Affections of the Believer, in Prayer, seen in three things.

*First*, He acts in the Will (of the Believer) a willingness to choose and love (unfeignedly) the Matter discovered to the Understanding, out of the Law and the Gospel, *Psal. 110. 4. Thy People shall be wil-*

ling in the day of thy Power. Phil. 2. 13. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, &c.

To do, as well as to say; the property of a Soul (savingly) regenerate, Jo. 13. 17. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. Ja. 1. 2. But be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only, deceiving your own Souls. Rev. 22. 14. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City.

To use good Words, and Orthodox Expressions, (in Prayer) and not to love, and practice the same, the Character of an empty Formalist, Psal. 50. 16. But to the Wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my Covenant in thy Mouth. Prov. 17. 7. Excellent Speech becometh not a Fool. Esa. 29. 13. Forasmuch as this People draw nigh me with their Mouth, and with their Lips do honour me, but their Heart is removed far from me; and their fear towards me is taught by the Precepts of Men. Tit. 1. 16. They profess that they know God, but in Works they deny him.

Secondly, He excites the Will and Affections to delight in, and to desire after them. Esa. 26. 8. Yea, in the way of thy Judgment have we waited for thee; the desire of our Soul is to thy Name, and to the Remembrance of thee.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, He worketh in the Believer a restless and an unwearied struggling after a real Union with God in them, *Psal. 42. 1. 2. As the Heart panteth after the Water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee O God; my Soul thirsteth for God, yea, for the living God. Psal. 53. 8. My Soul followeth hard after thee, thy Right Hand upholdeth me. Phil. 3. 10. That I might know him, and the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his Sufferings; being made conformable to his Death.*

Secondly, The Holy Ghost fills the Heart and Soul of the Believer with Mourning, and godly Sorrow for Sin, *Zach. 12. 10. And I will pour upon the House of David, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of Grace, and of Supplication, and they shall look on me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only Son. 2 Cor. 7. 10. For godly Sorrow worketh Repentance to Salvation, not to be repented of; but the Sorrow of the World worketh Death.*

Here's the Characteristical Note of Difference between a sound hearted Believer, and a Hypocrite, even their repenting and mourning for Sin; the Hypocrite he repents and mourns for Sin, as well as the true Believer; but the difference between the Repentance and Sorrow of the one, and the other, lies in the Object of their Repentance. The Object of the Hypocrite's Repentance, and Sorrow for Sin is Worldly,

such as worldly Disadvantage to self, as Shame to the Name, Loss, and Disadvantage in Outwards ; Horreur of Conscience, fear of Hell, and the like. Did none of these things ( now nam'd ) attend on Sin, ( as the sad consequences thereof ) the Hypocrite's Heart and Affections would soon be reconciled to the grossest Immoralities.

Whereas the Object of a true Believer's Repentance, and Sorrow for Sin, is a dearly loving and gracious God ( reconciled in Christ ) offended and dishonoured by Sin, committed against his just and holy Law.

The Language of the Hypocrite's Heart, ( when repenting and sorrowing for Sin ) if he would speak out what is within, would be after this manner : Oh ! unhappy Man that I am, that ever I should by consenting to such and such wicked Sins, spoil my Reputation, waste and imbezle my Substance, ruine my Health, torment my Conscience, and endanger the damning my Soul in the end.

This is that Repentance and Sorrow which is call'd Legal ; and with this kind of Repentance and Sorrow, *Judas, Cain, Achitophel, Esau*, and other Hypocrites have repented themselves into Hell.

On the contrary, the Language of a true Believer's Heart ( when Repenting and Mourning for Sin ) is thus : Oh ! vain, wretched, and miserable Man that I am,  
that

that ever I should act so foolishly, and unreasonably, as to grieve and offend so holy, so good, so gracious, and loving a God, by sinning against him, as I have done. I loath all Sin, ( in general ) as it is Sin against a holy God , but more especially such and such heinous Crimes whereby I have grieved the holy Spirit, whereby I am sealed to the day of Redemption. I abhor and loath my self, for what I have done, and shall never ( more ) be reconciled to my self, because of that Fountain of Impurity which dwells in me, from whence every actual Sin ( against God ) springs and flows. If there were no such things as Shame among Men, as loss in Outwards, as loss of Health, Torment and Horrour in Conscience, or Hell ( hereafter ) attending Sin, as the Consequences thereof. Yet, the truly regenerate Believer would ( notwithstanding ) grieve, and sorrow for Sin, because ( thereby ) his kind, merciful, and reconciled God, and Father, is offended, and grieved.

And the Glass wherein the true Believer is made to see both the horrid and vile Nature of Sin, and the love of God to him ( the chief of Sinners ) which are his Motives to Sorrowing, and repenting for Sin, is the Blessed Jesus, pouring out his Soul to Death.

*Thirdly,*

*Thirdly*, The Holy Ghost causeth in the Believer an inward delight in God, as he is the Object of Prayer, *Psal. 65. 2. O thou that bearest Prayer, unto thee shall all Flesh come, Psal. 75. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* The Ground of this Delight which the Holy Ghost causeth the Believer to have in God, as he is the Object of Prayer, it is threefold.

*First*, The Holy Ghost represents him, as set upon a Throne of Grace, *Heb. 4. 16. Let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we might obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need.* This Prospect of God, as on a Throne of Grace, is seen by the Eye of Faith, through the saving Illumination of the Holy Ghost.

*Secondly*, The Holy Ghost represents God, as standing related to the Believer, in the nearest Bonds of Relation that can be, as that of a Husband, and of a Father, *Esa. 54. 5. For thy Maker is thy Husband, &c. Jer. 2. 14. Turn, O backsliding Children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you. Jo. 20. 18. But go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God. Rom. 8. 15. But ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father. Gal. 4. 6. And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying Abba Father.*

*Thirdly*,



*Thirdly*, The Holy Ghost represents God as inviting the Believer to approach, and come near to his Throne with a Holy Boldness, and Childlike Confidence. *Ephes. 3. 12. In whom we have boldness, and access with Confidence. Heb. 10. 19. Having therefore, Brethren, Boldness to enter into the Holy-est, by the Blood of Jesus.*

*Fourthly*, The Holy Ghost helps the Believer, to keep his Eye on Jesus Christ, *Heb. 12. 2. Looking unto Jesus, &c.* This he doth on a three-fold Account.

*First*, As Jesus Christ, is the way of the Believers Approach to the Father. *John 34. 6. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No Man cometh to the Father, but by me. Heb. 10. 20. By a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, thorough the veil, that is to say, his Flesh.*

*Secondly*, As Jesus Christ is the Means of our Admittance into the Father's Presence; *Rom. 5. 2. By whom also we have access by Faith into this Grace wherein we stand. Eph. 2. 18. For through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father.*

*Thirdly*, As Jesus Christ is the Means of our Acceptance. *John 15. 7. If ye abide in me, and my Words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done for you. Ephes. 1. 6. To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*

*Fifthly*

*Fifthly*, The Holy Ghost enables the Believer to pray with Joy and rejoycing of Soul. *John 15. 11. These things have I spoken unto you, that my Joy might remain in you, and that your Joy may be full. Rom. 14. 17. For the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost.*

Under the Law they who expected a Blessing on the Sacrifice which they offer'd to God, they were to look (carefully) to two things :

*First*, To the Subject-matter of their Sacrifice, it was to be what the Lord himself had appointed, not what Mens own Fancies led them to.

*First*, The matter of their Sacrifice, *Lev. 22. 18, 19. Ye shall offer at your own Will a Male without Blemish of the Beeves, &c. But whatsoever hath a Blemish, that shall ye not offer.* Where God required that the matter of their Sacrifice should be of the Beeves, of the Sheep, or of the Goats : If the Jews had offered Swine ( or Dogs) Flesh, both they, and their Sacrifice too, had been rejected, as an Abomination.

So now, if any shall use (in Praying to God) Words (or Petitions) which agree not with the Form of Sound Words (expressly laid down in the Law and the Gospel) they will ( most certainly) be rejected, both they, and their Prayers too.

As for Example : If a Man shall pray to meer Creatures, such as Angels, or glorified Saints; or if he pray to God conjunctly with them, as Mediators of Intercession : And if he put up Prayers for things which are unlawful, God will Abominate both the Person, and his Prayers too, be those Prayers never so well composed, according to the Rules of Art and Learning.

*Secondly*, They were to look (carefully) to the manner how they offer'd their Sacrifice.

There were many who were sound in the first, who (for their sinful Neglect in the Second) were rejected. Witness *Esa. 1. 11, 12. To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices, &c.*

Here 'tis plain, that the *Jews* did offer such Sacrifices as were of God's own Appointment; but resting there, and not regarding the Manner; which was, that they should offer in Faith in the Son of God (then to come) of whom those Sacrifices were Typical; and true Repentance, accompany'd with a Hearty Reformation, they, and their multiply'd Sacrifices were rejected.

It is even so (this Day) in *England*; many are the Prayers and Petitions (such as they are) which are offered to God both by *Nonconformist* and *Conformist* too, but for want of a saving Faith (in the Son of God) and Evangelical Repentance towards God,

his

his Father, with a Hearty Reformation of Life, and Conversation, *England* (with her vain Oblations) stands fair for an utter Rejection from God. And who can, who dares say, that God doth (herein) deal unjustly, in Case he delivers *England* into the Hands of those unmerciful People; of whose Fashions and Ways *England* hath (of late Years) grown so foolishly fond. He that reads the History of the old Testament with due Observation, will find, that it hath been the usual Method of God (with the Israelites of Old) to Plague his Professing, Hypocritical People, by those Nations, whose Idolatries and wicked Customs they grew fond of. And if it fall out otherwise with *England*, God must (in a way of absolute Sovereignty, step out of the Path of his usual Methods of Providence.

The Right manner of Praying, consists in the sanctified Activity of the Will and Affections, when the Holy Ghost doth work (or beget) in the Soul (of the Believer) a due value of those things contain'd in the Matter of his Prayer.

This very thing, if rightly considered, and duely weigh'd in the Ballance of a scriptural and an unprejudic'd Consideration, might fill the Face of those Men with Shame and Blushing; and their Consciences with Terrour and Amazement, who assume unto themselves a Power of  
Impo-

Imposing (on the Conscience of People) the forms of Prayer compos'd by themselves; or other fallible Men, like themselves.

I will suppose those Forms of Prayer (by Men impos'd) to be Authentick, and Sound (as touching the Matter) yet seeing it belongs to the Holy Ghost, and to him alone (not excluding the Father, and the Son) to work the saving Graces of the Spirit in the Heart, and to stir up, and draw forth those Graces (by him wrought) into a lively Activity, upon (or towards) their proper Objects, in Prayer; I humbly conceive it, neither Presumption nor Uncharitableness, to affirm, that all such imposed Forms, are not the least part of those (God-provoking) Abominations, which threaten to lay the Land waste.

That Person, (or Nation) who (wilfully) separates between the Form, and the Power of Godliness, must (himself) expect to be separated from eternal Life.

If the Grace of God in Christ doth not prevent them.

*Quest. 7.* By what Arguments may a weak and tempted Believer be encouraged to go on with Courage and Boldness in the Duty of Prayer, notwithstanding the many Difficulties, and Rubs, which lie in his way to discourage and daunt him?

To

*Ans.* To this great, and necessary Question I shall answer in seven Particulars.

*Arg.* 1. First, let the poor tempted Beleiver consider (and be convinced) that to continue stedfast in Prayer to God for whatever he wants, is most certainly the Beleiver's Duty. *Psal.* 105. 4. *Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his Face evermore.* 1 *The.* 5. 17. *Pray without ceasing. In every thing give Thanks; for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

*Arg.* 2. The necessitous Condition the poor Beleiver is in, and the innumerable Wants and Weaknesses he labours under. To such an one I (freely) say, if thou hast no want of pardoning Mercy, for Sins past; if thou standest in no want of renewing Grace; to help thee against indwelling Corruption; if thou meetest with no Temptations, and Tryals, which are too strong for thine own Strength; if thou canst live contentedly (and rejoycingly) without God; then go on in the Neglect of seeking God's Face, in Prayer; otherwise, know it, that Diligence, Constancy, and zealous Wrestling with God (in Praying) is the way appointed (by God himself) in which, all thy wants must be supplied.

*Arg.* 3. The little Grace thou hast (if it be saving) cannot stand still, in the (approved) Neglect of Prayer, but it will be



be restless, till it be crown'd with Perfection.

*Arg. 4.* God never yet rejected ( or cast out ) the Prayer of any true Believer, tho' his Faith, and his other Graces, were never so weak; but though he hath ( for a time ) hid his Face, and seem'd to reject the Prayers of his Children, yet he hath sooner, or later, appear'd for their Help, and Deliverance, *Psal. 102. 17. He will regard the Prayer of the Destitute, and not despise their Prayer. Ver. 18. This shall be written for the Generation to come; and the People that shall be Created shall praise the Lord.*

This glorious God hearing Prayer, is he who never ( yet ) said unto the Seed of Jacob, seek ye my Face in vain, *Esa. 45. 19. In a little Wrath I hid my Face from thee for a Moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have Mercy on thee, saith thy Redeemer, Esa. 54. 8.*

*Arg. 5.* The more stedfast and fixed thou art, in wrestling with God in Prayer, even then when all the World is against thee, and God ( himself ) seems to frown upon thee, the more will thy Faith appear to be a Divine Faith, and the more Glory wilt thou bring to God's great Name.

It is not to be wondered at, to see, and hear a Person speak, and act for God, while the continued Smiles of God's Face shines ( like the Sun ) upon him: But for a Soul  
to

to rest on God in the darkeſt Night of Affliction, when the Methods of Providence (like a Spring-Tide) ſeems to overturn all the Grounds of his Hopes, and Expectations; and when nothing appears (in the Face of Providence) but what appears to to the Eye of Senſe, and Carnal Reaſon, to be a plain Indication of the Hatred, and Wrath of God, than to believe in a frowning God, to truſt in him, to continue to pray to him Believingly, and Dependingly; this is Faith indeed, and Oh! How few (now living) can do thus?

*Arg. 6.* The encouraging Diſcovery God makes of himſelf, in the word of his Grace, he ſets himſelf forth as ſet on a Throne of Grace, clad with the Royal Robes of Goodneſs, Mercy, Love, Grace, and Compaſſion towards all returning coming Sinners with open Arms, ready to receive (with the moſt endearing Welcomes that a God can give) every poor trembling Soul, who thirſts and pants after his Grace and Favour.

*Arg. 7.* The Work and Office of Chriſt, (the exalted Son of God) about which he is now employ'd in the higheſt Heavens, namely, to repreſent (at God's Throne) the imperfect State, and afflicted Condition of all his Members in their Militant Condition here on Earth; and to make Interceſſion for them, with his and their Father in Heaven.

Heaven. Now, if the weak and tempted Believer did but know how incomprehensibly Excellent, and unconceivably Glorious a Person the Son of God is, and how overcoming and prevalent an Influence his Prayers have on God his Father, whatever, or whoever he prays for. The weakest Believer (on Earth) would hasten (with a holy Boldness) to the Throne of Grace, though Legions of Devils lay in his way.

Oh! poor Soul! if thou hadst but right conceivings of his Almightyness to save, and his faithfulness in discharging the Office he hath undertaken for elect Sinners, there is nothing in, or out of Hell that could (possibly) hinder, or discourage thee in coming to God; by him it was on this very account, that God, his Father, intrusted him with all the many Millions of Sinners, whom he chose to himself, out of lapsed *Adam's* fallen Posterity; he knew his Son's Almightyness to redeem and bring them to God; and how that his Truth and Faithfulness was no way short of his Almightyness.

And hath God the Father committed all the Elect to the care and trust of his Son Jesus Christ, and canst not thou find in thy Heart to venture thy one poor Soul with him to save it? And wilt thou not put that Honour upon him, in going (boldly) to God's Throne of Grace, in his Name and Merit, to obtain whatever thou wantest?

*The*

*The Conclusion, containing Answers to the Objections made by the Believer.*

*Objeſt.* 1. I am ſo weak; ſo very very weak in Prayer, that I am under great Diſcouragements, as fearing leaſt my praying might rather diſpleaſe, than pleaſe God.

*Anſw.* I answer in four Particulars.

*Fiſt*, The promiſe of Acceptance is made as truly to the weakeſt Grace, as it is to the ſtrongeſt. Remember, and (ſeriouſly) conſider what the meaning of that Promiſe in *Eſa.* 42. 3. is, *A bruised Reed will be not break; and the ſmoaking Flax ſhall be not quenck.* Here are two Metaphors in the ſame Text, both importing the ſame thing; and that for the greater confirmation of the Doctrin contain'd in this Text, which is, that where the Grace of God is, (in truth) though it be never ſo weak, (or ſmall, as to degree) Chriſt the Servant of God (in the great work of Mediation) will carry it moſt tenderly, and compaſſionately towards that Soul, untill he hath perfected the work of Grace begun, he will not deal roughly with, or carry it auſterely, and diſcouragingly, towards ſuch a poor Soul.

A Reed (at beſt) is but a weak and brittle thing, eaſily cruſht and broken; but when full of Bruiſes and Crackles, nothing can be more frail and liable to be cruſht by the

the least tread on it, by either Man or Beast.

The weakness of thy Grace (in Prayer) is here met with, and know it (for thy comfort) thou must; that albeit, thy Grace be never so small and weak, yet the Foot of Christ's Almightyness (which hath trampled thine Enemies to Death) will never tread on thee to hurt thee; he is so far from being angry, or displeas'd with thee for thy weakness, that the weaker thou art (in Grace) the more doth his Bowels yearn towards thee. The sickliest and weakest Child (in a Family) is (always most pity'd, and indulg'd. *When the Poor and Needy seek Water, and there is none, and their Tongue faileth for Thirst; I the Lord will hear them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them, Esa. 41. 17.*

Secondly, The real sense of inward weakness (accompany'd with earnest and constant Endeavours to grow stronger in Grace) is an undoubted Argument of the truth of Grace in thee, *Rom. 7. 23. But I see another Law in my Members warring against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin that is in my Members. Phil. 3. 14. I press towards the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

In the Person of Paul, the Condition of all true Believers is set forth, as it was with him, (as touching the Sense he had of In-dwelling

dwelling Corruption, and his labouring after Perfection in Grace) so is it with every sound Believer in measure.

*Thirdly*, That small Measure of Grace given thee (in effectual Calling) is the Earnest of the Spirit; which is never given but in the Right of Election; and that as a Pledge of future Perfection in Conformity to Jesus Christ thy Head, and King. Where strength in Praying is wanting, there the Holy Ghost supplies that want, by filling the Heart and Soul of the weak Believer with unutterable Groans, Rom. 8. 26.

*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us with Groanings, which cannot be uttered.*

When a weak Believer is at a Loss in his own Spirit, and is ready to Sink under the heavy Weight of his innumerable Infirmities, not knowing what to do, or how to compose a Prayer, which may suit his afflicted Condition, then the Holy Ghost steps in (as a Comforter) and teaches the Believer how to spell out a Prayer, the Word in the Greek is *συναντιλαμβάνει* which (properly) signifies, one who comes in; to the help (and Relief) of another, who is just sinking under the Weight of a heavy Burden, the which he is no way able, either to lift, or carry. And oh! How

exactly



exactly doth the Word (here) used, set forth the Condition of a weak Believer?

How many are those Infirmities, and Weaknesses, those Loads, and Weights of Sin, and Afflictions, under which the poor Believer (very often) feels himself ready to Sink? And from which, he finds himself no way able to deliver himself. Now comes the Holy Ghost, in the very nick of Time, (as we say) and he puts under the Shoulder of his own Omnipotency, and bears up the sinking Believer, that he despairs not. And not only so, but he leads the poor thirsting needy Soul, to the never failing, and inexhaustible Store-house of the Promises of Gods everlasting Covenant of Grace, directing the Believers Thoughts to those Promises, which best suit his present Condition, quickening the Believer (inwardly) and teaching him how to improve, and plead those Promises in Prayer, in the Name of Christ, in whom all those Promises, are *Yea, and Amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20.

O Happy, and (for ever) blessed those Souls, who are (always) accompany'd with such a Teacher, with such a Comforter! How contemptible in their Eyes, are all the painted Forms of Prayer, prepared (by Men) for those who have not the Spirit of Christ.

Fourthly, Time was, when thou hadst no good Motion (at all) in thee. So wit-

nesseth the Spirit of God (by Paul) Rom. 6. 20. *For when ye were the Servants of Sin, ye were free from Righteousness.* That is, ye were (altogether) destitute, of all saving Grace, and were not (at all) subject to the Law of Righteousness, but were Bondslaves to Sin, and Satan.

But now, since the Work of Regeneration hath passed on thee, behold there is a twofold Nature striving for Headship, and Mastery, in thee, and these two differing Natures, in thee, is an invincible Argument, that thou hast saving Grace in thee, as well as corrupt Nature, Gal. 5. 17. *For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh.*

*Object. 2.* I have prayed much, and often, but God hears me not, &c.

*Answer.* In three Particulars.

*First,* There may be some Corruption, or other, which is secretly indulg'd, and while it is so, do not wonder that God hides his Face from thee, Isa. 59. 1, 2. *Behold the Lords Hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his Ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your Iniquities have separated between you, and your God, and your Sins have hid his Face from you, that he will not hear.* Psal. 66. 18. *If I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the Lord will not hear me, &c.*

*Secondly,* God gives a deaf Ear to thy Prayers, to stir up that little Grace in thee

thee, and to make thee cry louder to God.

*Pro. 15. 8. The Sacrifice of the wicked is an Abomination to the Lord; but the Prayers of the Upright is his Delight.*

A Nurse (or tender Mother) many times withdraws, and hides her self from the Child she dearly Loves, to make the Child the more fond of the Nurse, or Mother.

*Esa. 54. 8. In a little Wrath I hid my Face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.*

Thirdly, God may deny thee Comfort for a long time, and yet give thee Strength (in the Inward Man) to wait on God in the way of Duty, and Dependance; the which if God give thee it is a far greater Blessing and Mercy to thee, then if he should give thee the Comfort thou fain wouldst have: For in waiting on God, by Faith and Patience, thou dost glorifie God, and wilt be sure to speed well for thy self in the End.

*Esa. 40. 31. But they that wait on the Lord, shall renew their Strength; they shall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they shall run, and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. Esa. 50.*

*10. Who is there among you, that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the Voice of his Servant; that walks in Darknes, and hath no Light; let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God. Thus to wait on God in Prayer, resting on his Promise (even*

then, when Clouds and Darkneſs ſeems to be round about him) is a ſure and convincing Argument, that thou art a Child of promiſe. *Rom. 4. 18. Who againſt Hope believed in Hope, &c. Ver. 20. He ſtagger'd not at the Promiſe of God through unbeleif, but was ſtrong in Faith, giving Glory to God. Ver. 23. Now it was not written for his Sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us alſo to whom it ſhall be imputed, if we believe on him who raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the Dead.*

*Object. 3.* I am afraid my Praying is but Hypocriſy.

*Anſw.* In two particulars.

*First*, Doſt thou pray out of an ill Deſign? *First*, to carry on a Trade of ſinning the better? *Secondly*, To be eſteem'd Religious and Holy. *Thirdly*, In hopes to merit Salvation by it?

If theſe things be thy Motive to Prayer, thou mayeſt (juſtly) ſuſpect thy ſelf; if otherwiſe, happy art thou. *Eſa. 30. 18. And therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he might have mercy on you; for the Lord is a God of Judgment, bleſſed are all they that wait for him.*

*Secondly*, Thy fearing, that thy Praying is but Hypocriſy, is an Evidence, that thy Heart is upright with God.

None leſs concern'd, in ſuſpecting (or fearing

fearing) the unsoundness of their Hearts, then the grossest Hypocrites.

*Pro. 22. 14. Happy is he that feareth alway, but he that hardeneth his Heart, shall fall into Mischief.* It is the property of (Heart) uprightness, to be attended (often) with Fears and Jealousies, that all is not right within.

*Object. 4.* I am so distressed and distracted with roving Thoughts (in Prayer) especially Atheistical and Blasphemous Thoughts against God, the Holy Scriptures, and all that is sacred, that my very Flesh even Sweats and Trembles to think of it; surely the praying which is mixed with such Thoughts, can be no other than abominable to God.

*Answer.* In three things.

*First,* Thy Case and Condition I am (experimentally) sensible, is (on the account of those hydeous and blasphemous Thoughts) very bitter and afflictive. But for thy Comfort know, *Secondly,* That such Thoughts as are so disturbing and distracting to thee, are from the Devil, and the Remains of the Old *Adam's* Nature; and to their Account such Thoughts will be charged, by God, but not to thine.

Under the Law, the Virgin, the Damsel that was Betrothed to a Man, no Sin (worthy of Death) was to be found in her, in Case she cryed out for Help. *Deut. 22.*

7. The Soul that is Betrothed to the Man Christ Jesus (Gods own Son) when *Satan* the Grand Enemy of God, and thy Salvation, makes a forcible Entry upon thee, by his infernal Temptations, be it Blasphemy, or whatever thou canst complain of, thou mayest rest assured, that God will never charge that Blasphemy, of the Devils darting into thee, upon thee; but upon the Devil, his and thine Enemy.

Take this for a sure (and an infallible) Rule, in Divinity (*viz.*) That that Sin (be it what it will) which is thy Burden, and which thou dost Abhor, and Loath, it shall never hinder thy being accepted of God, or thy going to Heaven, when thou dyest.

*Thirdly*, That Principle (within thee) which hates, and resists those horrid, and vile Thoughts, which crowd in upon thee (be they either darted or injected) into thee, by *Satan*; or arise (like stinking Fumes) from the Fountain of that Impurity of thy vile and corrupted Nature) it is the new Nature, whereof thou wast made a Partaker, in effectual calling; this new Nature strives against the old *Adam's*.

Holy *David* (though a Man after Gods own Heart) seems to have been infested with the self-same Distemper, of which, thou complaineest; see and consider what he complains of. Psal. 119. 113. *I hate*



*vain Thoughts, but thy Law do I love. And in Psal. 94. 19. In the multitude of my Thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul. Here were Swarms (upon Swarms) of Soul-distressing, and Heart-distracting Thoughts, which crowded in upon him, but yet he gave not way to sinful Discouragement because of them, but opposes the Graces, and Comforts of Gods Holy Covenant to them, and hereby he found Relief. According to that in 2 Sam. 23. 5. Although my House be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my Salvation, though he make it not to grow. Let David's Distress (and Aylement) be what it will, from without, from within, from his Personal Sinnings, or his Family's short comings; in fearing and serving God, the everlasting Covenant of God's free and rich Grace, is the Refuge he flies to. Do thou as David did, and fear not, but thou wilt find Help, and Relief, as he did. It is with thee (in this Case) as it was with Rebecca, when she sensibly felt the Twins struggling in her Womb. Gen. 25. 23. And the Lord said, two Nations are within thy Womb.*

So with thee, here are two Natures, at open War, within thee, the old Adam's leading to Sin, and the second Adam's resisting, and hating Sin.

*Object. 5.* I am so unconstant in the Duty of Prayer, that I fear my Heart is not Sound, and Right with God.

*Ans.* Unconstancy, and Fickleness (in walking with God) is a Sin to be bewailed and repented of; but not at all to be a Ground (or Cause) of discouragement in praying to God.

*Reas. 1.* Because the Disease, now complain'd of, was very incident to the People of God, of old; whom (notwithstanding their Unconstancy, and Fickleness in walking in the ways of God) God own'd for his own People, and blessed them. Hosea 6. 4. *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your Goodness is as the Morning Cloud, and as the early Dew it goeth away.* The 87th Psalm is full to the Purpose, discovering how unconstant, and wavering the Israelites of old were, in walking in Gods ways, and yet how wonderfully God bore with them, and pardoned them.

*Reas. 2.* Because unconstancy and fickleness is a natural Imperfection, under which all Gods Children do groan, and labour more, or less, while in a State of Imperfection.

*Thirdly,* And whereas that Place in *Ja. 1. 8.* *A double-minded Man is unstable in all his ways,* is (on every occasion of the Believers neglecting his Duty) apply'd to

to the Beleiver, as if he himself were there design'd. Every true Beleiver is to know, that the Spirit of God (in that Place) doth not intend a Man who is (naturally) of a changeable (and fickle) Temper ; but one, whose Heart and Soul are divided between two Objects, as if the Person had two Hearts, one for one Object, and another for another Object. *'Ανὴρ διΰχου*, *vir Duplex Animo*, A Man who is of a double Mind, or who hath two Minds, who is divided between two Objects, not knowing whither of the two to choose, or adhere to ; as when a Man meets with two Path-ways before him, and knows not which way of the two he had best venture on. Such a Man, as hath his Heart and Affections divided between God and his Lusts, being desirous to serve both. As the Israelites were divided between God and *Baal*.

This cannot be apply'd to any Beleiver, because of the Choice he was enabled to make in effectual Calling. His Heart and Affections are not at an uncertainty (as touching the Object of their Choice) God (in Christ) is the Object of every true Beleivers Choice and Delight. *Whom have I, in Heaven, but thee ? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee,* Psal. 73. 25. *My beloved is mine and I am his.* Cant. 2. 16.

It is one thing for a Believer to start out of the way of Duty, through the violence of a Temptation : And it is another thing, to turn the Back (wilfully) on God, and to choose another in his Room. The former of these, is very common with true Beleivers. The other is proper (only) to such, as never knew God (Experimentally) nor chose him for their God.

*Luther* was a Man mightily given to Prayer, yet so addicted was he, to the serving of God, that he was thence styl'd (by the godly who knew his Zeal and Fervour therein ) *Insatiabilis dei Cultor* , an Insatiable Worshipper of God. He could never have enough of it, and so strong was he in Faith, that as often as the Devil appear'd to him, ( which was very frequent ) he made him fly.

This same *Luther*, he did (very often) bind himself, by solemn Vows, and Promises to God , that he would keep up a constant Course of private Praying to the Almighty ; but (therein ) he so (frequently) miscarried in (breaking his Vows and Promises about Praying) that he grew ashamed of his unconstancy ; and at length, he vowed, that he would vow no more.

Thy sinful unconstancy, thou dost not like, or approve of it, and when ever thou dost trip, or fall, in the way of Duty ; thou canst not rest, till thou return, and gettest

gettest into the way of Duty again ; this argues that thy Heart is sound with God.

*Object. 6.* I am as dead, and hard-hearted in Prayer, as a Log or Stone : I cannot weep, or be rightly affected with my deadness. Oh ! what shall one in my bewildered Condition do ?

*Ans.* In four Particulars.

*First.* There is a partial Deadness in the most lively Believer this side Glory, and if thou hadst not a Principle of spiritual Life in thy Soul, thou couldst no more feel thy spiritual Deadness (or complain of the same) then the Man who is (naturally) Dead, can feel himself to be Dead, or complain of the same. I may here allude to that of *Solomon*, for the Living know that they shall die ; but the Dead know not any thing, &c. *Eccles. 9. 5.*

*Secondly,* There is a sweet and gracious Promise left on Record which suits thy present malady.. Read, and Apply it (often) in Prayer. *Ezek. 26. 26. A new Heart also will I give unto you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the Heart of Stone out of your Flesh, and I will give you an Heart of Flesh.* God made *Job's* Heart soft, and broken, by the Methods he took with him, *Job 23. 16.* He can, and will do the like for thee, if thou continue to plead his own Promise, watching at Wisdoms Gates, standing at the Posts of her Doors *Pro. 8. 34.*

*Thirdly,*

*Thirdly*, As to the Case of shedding Tears (in Prayer) I must tell thee (assuredly) that thy Case (herein) was mine ; while I was under the Spirit of Bondage, I could not shed one Tear, for those Sins under whose Weight I felt my self sinking, though I might gain Heaven thereby. And this became an occasion of very great Horrour and Despair in my Spirit. Concluding, that because I could not vent my Sorrow and Repentance by Tears, that therefore God had given me up to judicial Hardness. I thought (verily) that none were true Penitents, but such as did abound in shedding Tears, but I (afterwards) found my self mistaken in this point : shedding Tears depends more on the Body's Constitution, and natural Temper, than upon the brokenness of Heart for Sin. By the same Parity of Reason, that an heard-hearted Hypocrite may abound with Tears, for his Sins, and yet remain still Impenitent, and harden'd in Sin, so a real Believer may (in reality) be truly Penitent, and (evangelically) sorry for his Sins, and yet have not one Tear to shew. Thy want of Tears is supplied and made up by a far better Gift, even those unutterable Groans produced in thy broken Heart, by the Holy Ghost. Herein thou excellest all weeping Hypocrites Living. They may abound with Tears (which are but a Work of Nature) but thou aboudest with



with sanctify'd Groans, which are supernatural; even the free Gift and powerful Operation of the Holy Ghost. *Rom. 8. 26.*

*Fourthly*, And whereas thy Case seems to be so dark, and puzzelling, that thou knowest not what to do, let me advise thee to two things.

*First*, Beware thou judge not thy self (with Reference to thy State, or God's dealing with thee) by Sense, or carnal Reason. The Footsteps of the Almighty (in his Providential Dispensations towards some of his Children in this World) are not easily traced, or found out. *Psal. 79. 19. Thy way is in the Sea, and thy Path in the great Waters, and thy Footsteps are not known; Clouds and Darknes are round about him, Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne, Psal. 79. 2.* Let Gods dealing with thee be never so intricate yet herein lies the comfort and security of thy drooping Spirit, *viz.* That Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne. He cannot (possibly) take a wry (or wrong) Step. His Providential Dispensations, and the Promises of his Holy Covenant, will (in the End and Issue of affairs) meet and agree.

*Secondly*, Though God seems not only to hide his Face on thee, but also to write bitter things against thee, go thou on still to wait on him, and to trust in him. Let *Job's*  
Resolution

Resolution be thine. Although he slay me, yet will I trust in him, *Job. 13. 15.* None can give thee better Advice in thy Case, then God himself. *Esa. 50. 10.* Who is there among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the Voice of his Servant; that walks in Darknes, and hath no Light, let him trust in the Name of the Lord and stay himself upon his God. And now to shut up the whole with a Word or two of Use and Application.

*First*, Learn hence to know, and consider, if what I have discoursed on this Subject prove true, (as I stedfastly believe it will) how wretched and deplorable a Condition must *England* be in, seeing how great Strangers (and not only so, but open Enemies to Regeneration work) the generality of professing Protestants in *England* are. If no Man will prove a prevailer with God, but he who is a righteous Man, *viz.* Righteous by the imputed Righteousness of the Son of God, and Righteous by a principle of Sanctification wrought in the Soul in Effectual Calling; and that God will loath and abominate all Prayer, and Prayers, which are not inwrought in the Soul by the quickening and sanctifying Energy of the Holy Ghost, but devised and starched up by humane Art, and Learning, How few Persons in the Kingdom (comparatively) will be found fit to draw near to a departing God?

And

And how few of the many thousands of Prayers (such as they are) which are put up to God by *England's* spiritual Guides, how few must those Prayers be, which God will accept as pleasing to him?

This may seem (to some) a great piece of Unchritableness, and Censoriousness, to have such low and contemptible Thoughts of the great and wise Men of the Land, who are advanced to the Dignity of sacred Office, as to think, or say, that neither their Persons, nor yet their well-composed Prayers will be accepted of God; in answer to whom, I need no more than to repeat what I have already affirm'd, *viz.* That the Man whom God will vouchsafe to hear, he must be a Man who is new Born, not one who laughs at Regeneration-Work, accounting it no better than a Phanatick Dream. He must be a Man who is not a Stranger to the Spirit of Prayer, but one who is acted by the mighty Efficiency of the Holy Ghost, who teacheth all true Believers to call God *Abba* Father, and that not in a Rotary way, or in a formal customary Manner, as is too too much in fashion in these sinful Kingdoms, but in Faith and fervent Love and Zeal in the Soul within set on Fire by the Spirit of Grace.

*Secondly,* Learn hence how precious and valuable right Prayer is; many, indeed, laugh at it, accounting it no better than a  
meer

meer piece of canting Stuff, an Argument that such Scorners were brought up in the very Suburbs of Hell. Others have taken a liberty to say, That praying by the Spirit is a praying by the Devil, an Argument that such are the Off-spring and Successors of those blaspheming Pharisees, (now in Hell) who charg'd the Son of God with casting out Devils by *Belzebub* the Prince of Devils. But what slight soever prayerless and blaspheming Wretches put on spiritual Prayer, most certain it is, that among all the various and differing Sounds and Voices of God's Creation, none so pleasing and delightful to God, as that of right Prayer. The Prayer of the Upright, is by God himself, call'd his Delight, *Prov. 15. 8.* And in *Cant. 2. 14.* It is said to be sweet to Christ, and that as it is the Voice of the New Creature, begotten of God, and formed by the Spirit of Christ in the renewed Soul of a true Believer.

Right Spiritual Prayer is (as I may say) the Key which unlocks the Door of the Store-House of God's precious Promises, and fetches in suitable and seasonable Supplies out of the fulness which is in Christ, for all his Members. It was the saying of *Jerom*, That, *Nihil charius emitur quàm quod precibus emitur*, Nothing (said he) is more dearly bought than what is bought by Prayer. Not that Prayer can merit any good

at the Hand of God, but as right Prayer presents to God the spotless Righteousness of Christ his Son, and that powerful Intercession which he makes in Heaven, which are the meriting and procuring Causes of all that good, which all Believers either receive, or stand in need of.

Mr. Dod us'd to say, that a Believer is well enough, while he can pray, though he hath nothing of Earthly Comforts to help or support him.

*Luther*, whenever he heard that a storm of Persecution was a coming on the Churches of Christ, he would run to Prayer, and sing the 46th *Psalms*, crying out, *Now let God rule the World as he pleaseth*. Were the Believers in *England* as strong in Faith, and as well acquainted with the Spirit of right Prayer, as he was, we should not put that Honour on the Enemies of *England*, as to fear what they can do to effect the overthrow of God's Heritage in the Land. But woe and alas, the generality of *England's* Professors (yea, the most Spiritual of true Believers themselves) are most wretchedly prone, to let their Thoughts and Tongues run out upon Enquiries: What Men have we in Parliament? In what Posture is our Fleet? What shall we do, if we lose the *Straights* Trade, more than they are to live by Faith, and to rejoyce in the lively Hope, and fixed Expectation of what God

(who

( who cannot lye ) hath not only promised, but even sworn he will do for his People's Deliverance? This is (in my Judgment) as sure an Argument of the Spirit's being withdrawn from us, and of Religion being in a dwindling Condition in the Nation, as any I can name. The Lord affect us all with it, before it prove too late. It would prove no small Mercy to *England*, could we but look on the Tyrant of *France*, to be no other than (as indeed he is) a Rod in the Hand of the All-effecting Providence of that God, against whom we all have sinned greatly, and heinously; and that we would with greatest concernedness consider, that it is not so much with the Rod of God's Wrath we have to do, as with the Hand that holds it. If God hath not (judicially) given *England* up to be a prey to its Enemies, he will (I doubt not) send forth such an Effusion of his good Spirit into the Souls of the Believers in *England*, as will stir up, and set on work the Spirit of Prayer, which will give God no rest untill he let this Rod fall to the Ground, or else cast it into the Fire.

Right Prayer will prove of greater force both to hasten the Enemies utter overthrow, and the Churches Deliverance, than all the Resolves in both Houses of Parliament, to encourage a War with *France*; and than all the Arms in the new Armory, in the

Tower



Tower of London, &c. to which I add; and than all the Fleets we have at Sea, and the Allies we have abroad, if we had ten thousand times as many as we have. And that on the account of its engaging Omnipotency, to arise for the Churches Help and Relief.

F I N I S.

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E R R A T A.

Page 2. for *Isa.* read *Ja.* 5. 16. p. 16. l. 18. r. *to the utmost of his power.* p. 20. l. 18. r. *Gal.* 4. 30. p. 29. l. 3. for *perfection* r. *perfect.* p. 30. l. 22. stop at *Zealots.* p. 73. the last line, supply the word *waste* which was omitted. p. 82. l. 20. for *the* read *this.* p. 94. l. 15. read *of the Power and Purity of Gospel Religion.* p. 97. l. 3. r. *manners.* p. 109. l. 12. for 44. r. 34. p. 122. l. 17. the Parenthesis is wrong. p. 126. l. 6. *to* is redundant. p. 127. l. 17. wrong pointed.

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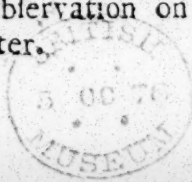
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